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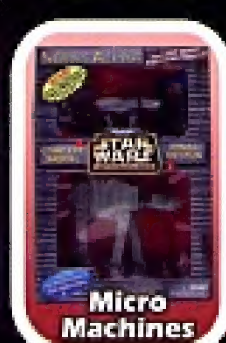
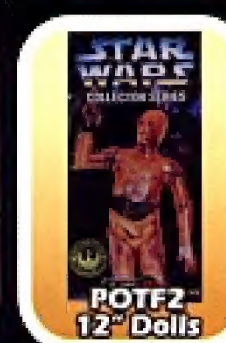
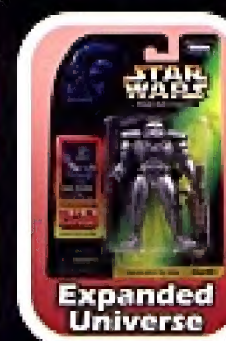
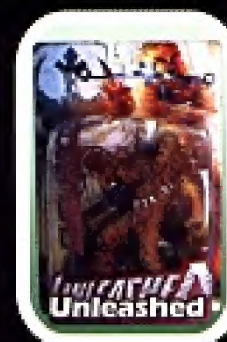


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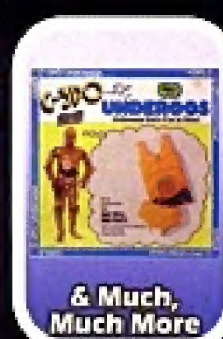
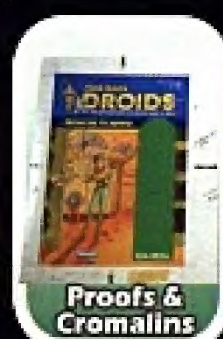
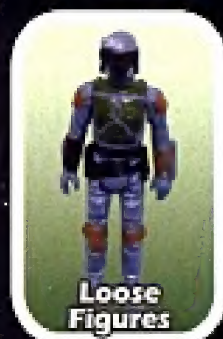
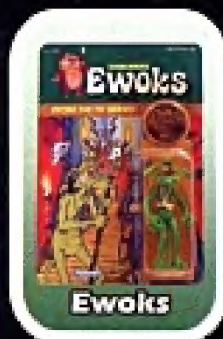
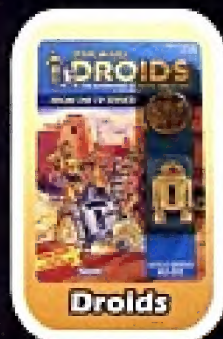
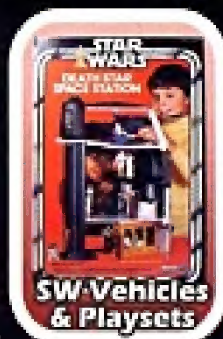
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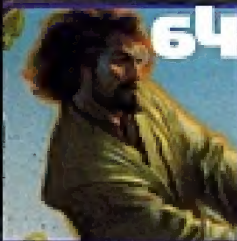


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by Sandy Clark

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by Timothy Zahn

This time, it is Obi-Wan Kenobi who goes ahead without backup. Before he can fight the Separatists, however, he must first deal with the natives.

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The art of Star Wars belongs in a museum.

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Thanks...and See You Around!

Almost two years ago, my first editorial appeared in *Insider* #62. I used it to outline Paizo's vision for making the *Star Wars* Fan Club more than just a magazine – we wanted to bring back the Fan in Fan Club. Since then, we've taken one heck of a journey: We've added *Bantha Tracks* to *Insider*, put out two membership kits, run a number of Fan Club breakfasts and one dinner, and brought you several cool collectibles such as the Silver Boba Fett and the Holiday Yoda. Along the way, we've kept our eyes firmly on target – you, the fan.

As with most journeys, there is an end. This is the last issue of *Insider* published by Paizo Publishing, as it moves on to a new publisher. As for the Fan Club, it isn't going away; it's going back home to Lucasfilm, the place where it started and thrived for the first 10 years of the *Star Wars* era.

With Lucasfilm behind the Fan Club, we'll be able to do more cool things than ever before. Yes, I said "we." Lucasfilm has asked me to stay on board as president of the Fan Club, so I will still be here, working as your advocate to the folks at Skywalker Ranch.

How will things change for you, the fan? Always in motion the future is, but with Lucasfilm behind the Fan Club again, I am very optimistic. In this issue of *Insider*, you'll find specifics about the new benefits of Fan Club membership.

For now, I'd like to offer my heartfelt thanks to all those at Paizo who have helped make *Insider* the best *Star Wars* magazine ever printed: Dave Gross, whose vision has kept the magazine growing and expanding over the past few years; Vic Wertz, who never let me forget that the fans are the most important thing; Mike Mikaellian, whose passion for *Star Wars* was felt in each issue; Jenny Scott, who made sure the prose flowed flawlessly; and Theresa Cummins and Scott Okumura, who both made *Insider* the prettiest magazine on the newsstand. We couldn't have published this magazine without you.

I hope to see you at this summer's many fan events, including the big *Star Wars* presence Lucasfilm has planned for Comic-Con International in San Diego in July. Until then, only one year, two months, one day, thirteen hours, and six minutes to go until Episode III!

Lisa Stevens
President, Official *Star Wars* Fan Club
22 March 2004, 10:54 AM PST



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About the Contributors



Timothy Zahn has been dabbling in the *Star Wars* universe since 1991, when his first *Star Wars* novel, *Heir to the Empire*, was published. His sixth, *Survivor's Quest*, was published this past February.



Mike Selinker makes puzzles and games for the express purpose of confounding millions. His cheeriest dream is that one day not long from now, the world will rise up with one voice and shout, "A pox upon you, Mike Selinker! Tell us the answer to 37-Down!"



Chris Alexander has been practicing origami since age 5. When he became an avid *Star Wars* fan, it was inevitable that he would combine the two. It is his dream to see his *Star Wars* origami books published.



Jenny Scott's articles about artists, writers, actors and musicians have appeared in *The Duelist*, *What's Up*, *the Bainbridge Island Review*, *the North Kitsap Herald*, and elsewhere. In addition to being an associate editor for *Insider*, she is associate editor on *Amazing Stories* and *Undefeated* magazines. She has a poetic license from Cornell University.



Sandy Clark is a writer, filmmaker and technology philanthropist living in Alameda, Calif. Bitten by the *Star Wars* bug in 1977, Sandy's inner seven-year-old is partially responsible for the short film "Crazy Watto" and died brilliantly in "Jedi Hunter." His current project can be found at americanscary.com.



New York Times – best-selling author Daniel Wallace is the writer or co-writer of a dozen books, including *Star Wars: The New Essential Guide to Characters* and *The DC Comics Encyclopedia*. Contrary to popular opinion, his hair is not made of plastic.

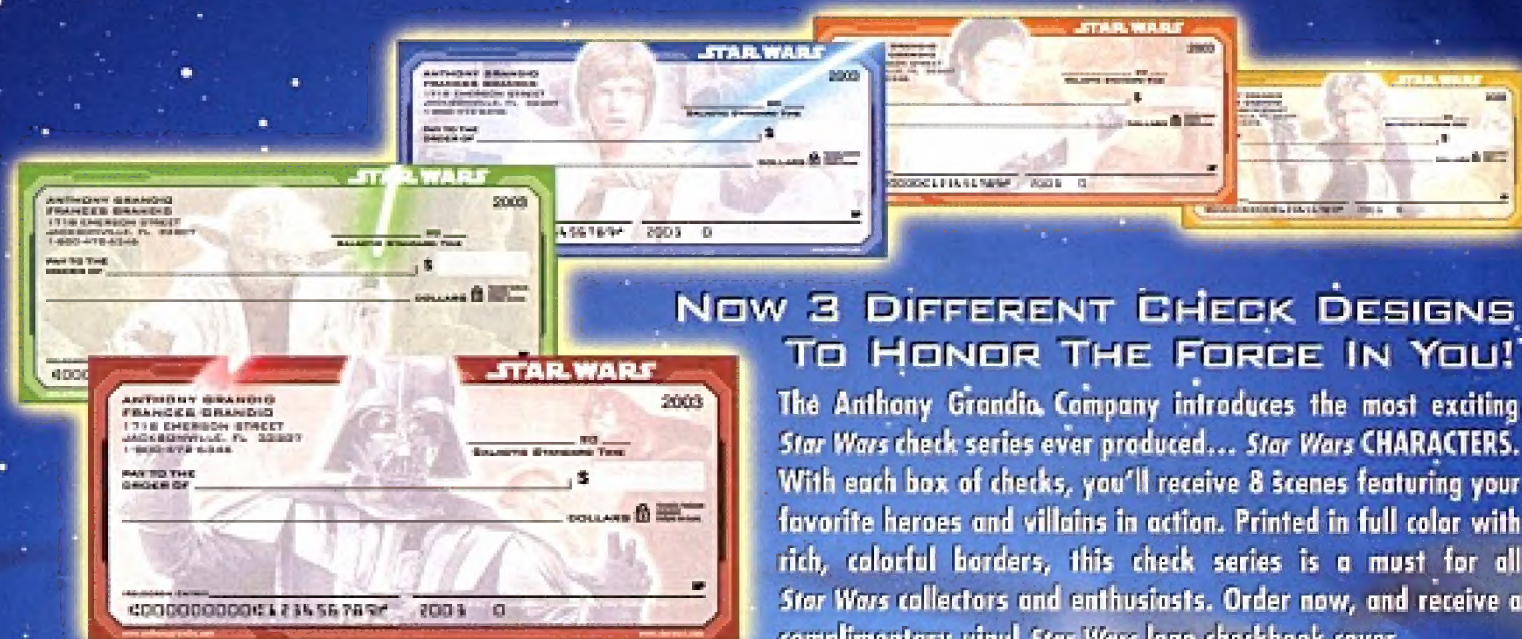


A *Star Wars* writer since 1994, Pablo Hidalgo has contributed to sourcebooks, adventures and fiction for the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game. Since joining Lucasfilm in 2000, he has written behind-the-scenes articles, profiles and more for starwars.com, including the extensive databank section, 2002's audacious HoloNet News website, and the Episode III Set Diaries.



Chris Trevas is the writer of "Set Piece" and an artist for several *Star Wars* products. As a freelance illustrator he has done assignments for Wizards of the Coast, Random House, DK Publishing, Golden Books, Scholastic, Topps and Palzo Publishing. At home in Michigan he maintains a modest collection of replica *Star Wars* props. For more about Chris, visit his website at christrevas.com.

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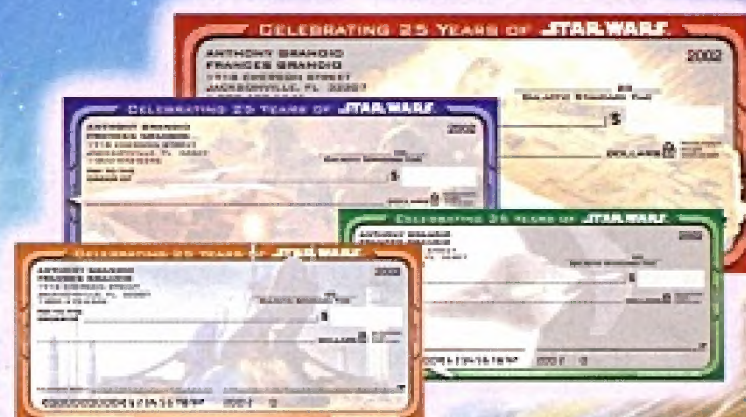


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Over these past two years as editor-in-chief of Insider, one of my favorite parts of the job has been serving as the "editorial we" of this column, not only for the letters that see print but also for the informal correspondence I've enjoyed with hundreds of Insider readers. You've been so kind, asked such interesting questions, and shared so much of your devotion to Star Wars that you've made even the most grueling deadlines seem more like an adventure than work. Even better have been those times we've met at Celebration or Comic-Con International in San Diego – even if I did have to keep an eye out for a few readers who might charge at me with a lightsaber for busting old Obi-Wan Kenobi's chops. (Now can you guess my favorite Star Wars character?)

There are far too many people to thank without overlooking someone important among our many excellent contributors, the terrific people at Lucasfilm, and of course our weird little family here at Palzo Publishing, so let me thank the people who have been most important to all of us and without whom none of this would have been possible: you.

Let's keep in touch and look for each other at conventions – but remember, troopers, I'm still counting on you for protection on the Obi-Wan thing!

May the Force be with you.

Dave Gross
dave@palzo.com



Younglings

First off, I love the magazine. Whenever I get it in the mail, I practically drop everything else so I can start reading. It's hard to pick a favorite section, but if I had to, it would be "Scouting the Galaxy." It is generally the first part I read.

I am writing in response to Mike Domrzalski's letter in "Rebel Rumblings" (Insider 74). He gave his boys the middle names of Luke and Owen. I would like to say that my wife and I did one better. Our 3-1/2-year-old is named Owen, and his 4-month-old brother is Luke Walker. Our 5-year-old dog is named Anakin.

Wanna Rumble?

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Luke has not learned to appreciate *Star Wars* yet, but Owen and I both enjoy watching the movies together. He can quote lines with the best diehard fans! He enjoys reenacting some of his favorite scenes, such as the final duel between Yoda and Dooku. Somehow, he always gets to be Yoda! If I miss a line, he is sure to correct me.

Keep up the great work.

MARK FENRICK
JANESVILLE, WIS.

While we applaud your devotion to the saga, we're still waiting for the brave new parents who want to honor Jar-Jar, Jabba or Jango.

My Home This Is

I love to collect action figures and have been a fan since *Star Wars: A New Hope* came out when I was 4 years old. One of the toys I always wanted as a child but never bought was Kenner's Dagobah Action Playset. To compensate – or, rather, to overcompensate – in my adult years, I have spent the past two years casually building my own. I enjoy experimenting with new projects, and after running across pictures of amazing dioramas online, I decided I had to try it out.

You can see more on my website at www.dagobahswamp.com.

STEVEN DAVIS
LEWISVILLE, TEXAS

If that diorama includes a working dragonsnake, we're impressed.



Running with Lightsabers

Love your magazine. I wish you were published as often as a daily newspaper! Oh well. I can't have everything in the universe, although I do have a little (size matters not) 16-month-old Padawan named Aidan in lightsaber training. I have the proof – check it out!

Can't wait for Episode III! Keep up the good work!

RICK EVANGELISTA
TORONTO, ONTARIO

A lightsaber might seem like a good toy for an only child, but once there are siblings involved, we think you're just begging to give young Aidan a half-brother.



Crash-Test Wookiee

I saw the picture of the ceramic Chewbacca in Steve Sansweet's column in *Insider 71*, and it brought back some memories.

I grew up in Massachusetts, and my friend Charles and I were the two biggest *Star Wars* fans, at least in our neighborhood. Sometime in 1980 or 1981, we went with his sisters to a ceramics class – not making pottery, but painting precast ceramic pieces. When I saw a ceramic Chewbacca, I knew I had to buy it and paint it.

I decorated Chewie in a beautiful brown glaze and then kiln-fired it after painting. A few days later, I took it home to my room. When my mother came home, I was so excited to show it to her that I ran toward the stairs without shoes on – and slipped on my socks and fell down the stairs.

Ceramic Chewie took the brunt of the damage and was smashed to bits. I was unhurt, perhaps due to his sacrifice, but distraught over the loss of my masterpiece. My father tried to console me by offering to replace my "Jawa."



Top: (L to R) Matt Myers, George Lyda, Gary Smith, Derek Nieman, Todd Lacey, and Eric McConnell. Photo by Pat Lyda.
Bottom: (L to R) Byron Ruckan, Russell Smith, Eric McConnell, George Lyda, Derek Nieman, Matt Myers, and Todd Lacey. Photo by John Roberts

Which Ones Are Bob and Doug?

The Carolina Garrison of the 501st recently paid a visit to the BI-LO Center in Greenville, S.C., to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. A local fleet services company in Greenville called AMECO made the event possible. They purchased enough tickets to a Greenville Grrrowl hockey game to give their employees a night out as recognition for their hard work. With the ticket sales, the company in turn sponsored the Carolina Garrison of the 501st, which had the following troopers in attendance: George Lyda (TK1733), Matt Myers (TK4950), Todd Lacey (TK5766), Eric McConnell (TK1293) and Derek Nieman (ID2606). Two potential recruits, Keith Crawford and Damien Somers, ran the photo table for the squad of stormtroopers.

President Gary Hernandez and Angel Rogers contributed the hard work on the AMECO side. The 501st raised \$609 during the game, which was presented to Russell Smith of the Make-A-Wish Foundation on ice during the first intermission.

Love the magazine. I'm staying subscribed.

George Lyda aka TK1733
Gray Court, S.C.

Say what you will about stormtroopers, at least they're better sports than hockey players. And better dancers, too.

Even though I was upset, it made me smile that my dad didn't know a Wookiee from a Jawa.

I signed up for a summer ceramics class and painted another Chewbacca bust. The second time I was a little more anxious, so I painted it with quick-drying stains and did a sloppy job. But I still have the bust, on a shelf in my parents' house.

And my father redeemed himself a few months later by bringing home a ceramic bust of Darth Vader for me, complete with a star-burst-yellow lightsaber and a blinking light inside. I never asked him where he got it. He may not have known what a Wookiee was, but he knew Darth Vader when he saw him!

JOHN HOLDERRIED
BROOKLYN, N.Y.

What is it about the Dark Lord of the Sith that makes fathers empathize with Darth Vader? Must be the universal fantasy of dismembering a son who talks back.

Star Wars Cheer

In *Insider* 74, Anna DeShong wrote about how she got hooked on Star Wars and how it has affected her life. She also mentioned an online group she was a part of (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/the_star_war_s_fan_club/). I have been a member of that group for three years, and I consider Anna one

of many good friends I have made there. So after seeing her letter get published, I wanted to write about what *Star Wars* means to me.

I was 3 years old when *Star Wars: A New Hope* premiered in 1977, and I have been hooked ever since. I've been collecting since I was a kid, I read the novels, I read the comics, and I've been a regular reader of the *Insider* since 1997. *Star Wars* has been a positive force for me through some painful times. One main thing that has helped me relax and feel better in times like those is *Star Wars*. I can watch one of the films or read a *Star Wars* book or comic, and it always cheers me up. So if I were ever asked what kind of fan I am, I would answer that I am a *Star Wars* fan, plain and simple.

BRIAN AKERS
LEBANON, VA.

Star Wars never fails to cheer us, too, but "relaxed" isn't the word we'd use for our post-viewing lightsaber battles. Maybe we're watching it the wrong way.

A Tale of Two Jedi?

Kudos to Jason Fry for his coverage of *The New Jedi Order* novels in *Insider* 74. I've been a *Star Wars* fan since seeing the first film in 1977. When *Heir to the Empire* was released in 1991, I was very excited at the

prospect that these books – and perhaps the movies – would return. For a while, I read each book as soon as it was released. In fact, I had a standing order with my local bookstore to reserve a copy as soon as one came out.

Over time I began to lose interest, probably because I felt they were moving away from the original trilogy to which I was desperately clinging. Reading the novelizations of *The Phantom Menace* and *Attack of the Clones* renewed my interest, and I'm now close to completing *Vector Prime* and intend to read all that I missed! So hats off to you for your coverage of the novels, and I hope similar articles of this kind are in the works on the other novels in the *Star Wars* galaxy. I'm sure if Dickens



were alive today, he'd be writing, "May the Force be with us ... every one!"

JON GUENTHER
ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

We're just glad that Episode IV started "A long time ago ..." instead of "I Am Born."

Read Responsibly

Reading *Insider* can be hazardous to one's health! Reading *Insider* 73, I smiled so much that my jaw ached, but it was the good sort of pain. By the way, the New Jedi Order article with the Japanese book-cover art was beautiful.

JULIE GILBERT
BRANCHBURG, N.J.

As long as you read in moderation and never, ever read and drive ...

Thirty-One and Counting

I have been a subscriber to *Insider* for several years now, and I just wanted to say that you have been doing an excellent job. I started collecting *Star Wars* in 1995 with the new Kenner line. I have a large collection, and to accommodate my toys, I have filled up 31 footlocker chests, and my bedroom is *Star Wars* galore, with loose figures, vehicles and dolls. I would like to share my massive spaceport collection with the readers of *Insider*. The LEGO *Spongebob* Squarespants I built for my niece, and the piñata was also for her, but I've decided to collect them myself.

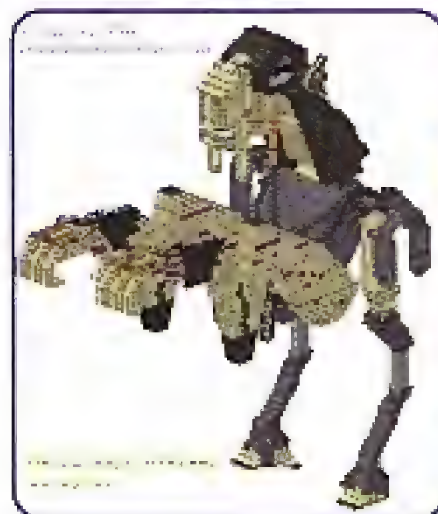
I'm also submitting a picture of my MLCad LEGO *Sebulba*, which I built using the program. I hope you like it.

TIM HOLLEMS
VALENCIA, CALIF.

*We like it! We just hope you mean that you're collecting new *Spongebobs* and piñatas, not taking back the ones you gave to your niece in Toydarian fashion.*



Answers to page 54 puzzle
Headlines from TATOOINE
TIMES SPORTS PAGE



THE OFFICIAL STAR WARS FAN CLUB IS COMING HOME TO LUCASFILM

In the spring of 1978, Lucasfilm created the very first Official Star Wars Fan Club to unify and spotlight worldwide fan activity, give exclusive inside access to the cast and crew as they prepared the next movie, provide a way to buy really cool exclusive stuff, and most of all...to celebrate Star Wars.

In the spring of 2004, as *Star Wars* blasts forward into Episode III and beyond, the Fan Club is coming home to Lucasfilm for the first time since 1987, and refocusing on the same great goals as when the club first arrived.

All of this,
AND MORE
are yours for a single
membership price of just
\$39.95!

STAR WARS INSIDER

Star Wars Insider magazine

Six issues of the magazine, bringing in-depth articles, glossy photos and the kind of fascinating content you've come to expect

Event benefits

Come to member-only regional events, such as Fan Club Breakfasts, and get special treatment at events such as Celebration III in Indianapolis April 21 to 24, 2005

Exclusive online features

Get a free *Star Wars*-themed e-mail address, e-mail alerts when your favorite collectibles become available, and exclusive newsletters

Membership

Be an official member of the *Star Wars* community, marked with your exclusive membership kit including a letter from George Lucas

HYPERSPACE

Exclusive online content

Twelve months of *starwars.com* Hyperspace: updated daily and bringing you unprecedented access to George Lucas and the talented crew creating the final *Star Wars* film, plus hidden gems from the Lucasfilm archives

Collector benefits

VIP treatment at *StarWarsShop.com*, including discounts on select merchandise, early purchase rights on hot items, plus exclusive products available only to members

Fan Community

Star Wars fans themselves will continue to be the spotlight of *Bantha Tracks* coverage, expanding frequency both online and in each magazine



Visit **starwars.com/fan** for the full details.

STAR

Little Fish, Big Pond

Keisha Castle-Hughes
Makes a Splash in Episode III

She was a girl who couldn't swim when she landed the lead role in *Whale Rider*. Still, Keisha Castle-Hughes turned out to be perfect for the role of a smart and assertive Maori girl who bonds with marine life. On top of that, she became the youngest actress ever to be nominated for a Best Actress Oscar.

"Award Season was hard," Castle-Hughes recalls. "In February, I was in Los Angeles one week for one award show or the other, and the next week I would go back to New Zealand to attend school." However, she didn't mind the flying back and forth. "I liked to squeeze school in whenever I could. I just wanted to go back to being normal. All the attention has been a bit overwhelming."

Discovered three years ago by a casting agent in her school in Mount Wellington, New Zealand, Castle-Hughes is still a newcomer to acting. Besides her role in *Whale Rider*, her upcoming stint as the Queen of Naboo in Episode III is the only other acting part she has ever gotten. Her preparation for *Star Wars* entailed going to the local video store and renting the five previous movies, which she hadn't seen before. "I liked them," she says, hesitating. "They seem to be boys' movies, though, with all the action and such. Nevertheless, they are lots of fun. Personally, I prefer romantic movies that make me cry."

Talking about her experience on the set of the highly anticipated episode is a bit like pulling teeth. Instructed well by Lucasfilm, she wouldn't reveal much. "The experience was pretty amazing but brief," she says about her one-day shoot.

"Before *Whale Rider* I had never been on location and had a lot of fun being away from home."

After playing the heir to a Maori chief, portraying Naboo royalty was only a step away. "Playing the Queen was amazing, especially wearing her elaborate costumes. I like dressing up. I just don't like walking in high heels. But actually I'm not supposed to talk about that either."

Castle-Hughes calls her stint on the *Star Wars* set "a great little taste of Hollywood." And yet the 13-year-old still hasn't determined whether she wants to continue acting when she's grown up. "I don't want to decide yet what I want to do with my life," she reflects. "I still have time." However, since her favorite subjects in school are English and drama, Castle-Hughes may be destined for a career as an actress. ☺

—Gabriela Tscherner-Patao

Below: Keisha Castle-Hughes, who received an Oscar nomination for leading actress for her role in *Whale Rider*, plays the Queen of Naboo in *Star Wars: Episode III*. Photo by Keith Hamshire.



From the World of Lucasfilm

NEWS

by Insider staff and Gabriela Tcharner-Patao



The Best Offal

The Gut-Bustingly Funny Carrie Fisher

Carrie Fisher's *The Best Awful*, the long-awaited sequel to her hit novel *Postcards from the Edge*, was released earlier this year. The novel continues the personal adventures of Suzanne Vale, a minor Hollywood celebrity and single mom who is living the stable – if boring – life of a recovering alcoholic who happens to have her own cable talk show. When the monotony – and the realization that it's been four years since she hooked up with anyone – becomes too much, she eases off of the medication she's been taking to manage her bipolar disorder, and she's off to the races. Her wild ride

through mania, depression and mental breakdown are occasionally tragic but mostly hilarious, and Fisher's trademark wit and love of language makes *The Best Awful* a delightful romp of a good read. We caught up with Fisher recently to ask about her book, writing, life, and, yes, *Star Wars*.

– Jenny Scott

Insider: Most reviews of *The Best Awful* emphasize its autobiographical nature. Do you ever wish people would discuss your fiction as fiction and not just as an extension of your life?

CF: I'm fairly comfortable with the status quo to the degree that I am comfortable at all, keeping in mind that I'm an alcoholic.

Words are critical to Suzanne Vale's sanity. When she breaks down, she forgets words, and as she recovers, she begins to remember them. What are words for you?

CF: When I cannot put "things" into words – "things" being feelings – I'm at sea, at a loss. Which is in no way like being "at a party." It's a dark place. Words are the bright bullets that shoot me into the clear light of day.

What's your earliest memory relating to language?

CF: I wanted to say the word "interesting." I could hear it so clearly in my head, but when it came out of my mouth, it came out as "intstuding."

When did you start writing?

CF: I started writing both journals and poetry when I was around 13 years old, if not before.

Which screenwriting work are you most proud of?

CF: *Postcards From the Edge*.

At the moment, who's your favorite writer (in any medium)?

CF: George Eliot.

Name a line that when you read it you thought, "Damn, I wish I'd written that."

CF: "When the music of being single stopped, she sat wherever she was," by Lorrie Moore.

What screenplay do you wish you'd written?

CF: *Being John Malkovich*.

What are your favorite movies?

CF: I like comedies and dramas.

Your favorite board game?

CF: Ugh – I loathe board games, but in fantasy, I would like "What Would Jesus Wear?"

If you were going to appear on *Jeopardy!*, what would be your dream *Jeopardy!* categories?

CF: Old Movies, Mental Illness, and Buck Henry's *Sex Life* (or are those all the same thing)?

Who would you cast to play Carrie Fisher in a movie, if you were unable to play yourself?

CF: Buck Henry or Mary Louise Parker.

How does Senator Padmé Amidala compare to your real-life mom, Debbie Reynolds?

CF: Ha – She doesn't retain as much fluid. Not as much of a sense of humor. I don't see Padmé as a performer [like Reynolds], but she does have a huge wardrobe much like

Debbie does [different style though].

Our most recent issue of *Insider* focused on the women of *Star Wars*. What observations do you have about the role women play in the *Star Wars* universe?

CF: The women of *Star Wars* don't have enough time to do typical women things, like shop, get their usual hair-styles, and get facials made from Jabba's placenta.

You told Katie Couric you'd like to play Princess Leia at this age, if the opportunity arose to play Leia on-screen, 20 years older, would you seriously consider it?

CF: Only if I was old Jewish Princess Leia, making soup for everyone as they came back from the most recent war. "Come on in, sit down, put your feet up, you look exhausted..." ☺



Republic Commando!

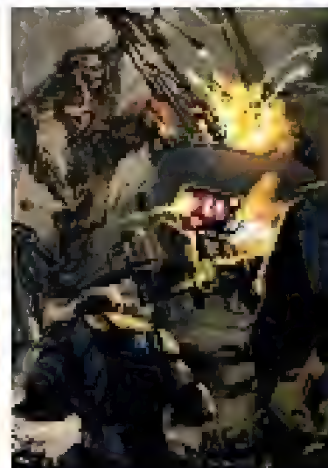
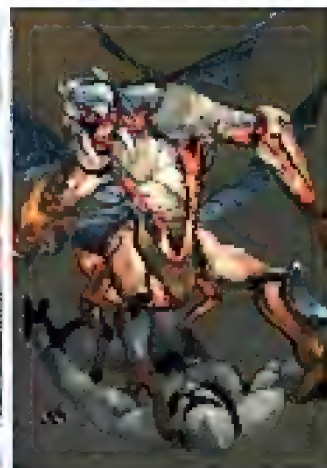
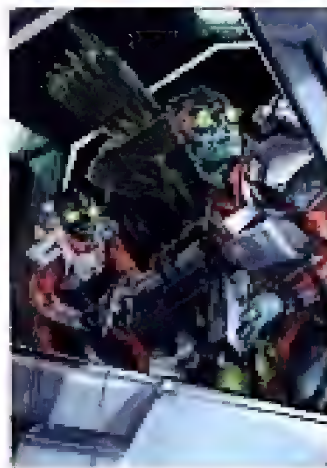
New Details on the New Video Game

This fall, enlist in the Clone Wars by joining one of the secretive Republic Special Operations units in *Star Wars: Republic Commando*.

In the 15-level LucasArts video game, you play an elite shooter in Special Ops who must lead a three-person squad through a gauntlet of assignments, from reconnaissance and infiltration/data retrieval to sabotage, hostage rescue, assault and

elimination. These missions will take players through a variety of familiar and all-new *Star Wars* settings and introduce them to both old and new characters, such as the upcoming Episode III menace, General Grievous.

Star Wars Republic Commando will offer a number of multiplayer modes for PC and Xbox – including deathmatch, team deathmatch and capture the flag – and will be optimized for live play with Xbox Live. More information can be found at the official product website, www.lucasarts.com/games/swrepubliccommando/. ☺



Obituary: Peter Diamond

Peter Diamond, well-known stunt arranger, performer, actor and director, died March 27, 2004, at Pinderfields Hospital in Wakefield, South

Yorkshire, following a severe stroke he had experienced six days earlier while driving home from the set of *Heartbeat*. He was stunt coordinator for the British TV series.

Born in 1929, Diamond spent more than 50 years of his life working in film and television, and his film credits include *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. In *Star Wars*, Diamond played three different roles: the Tusken Raider who attacks Luke Skywalker; Garouf Lafos, the character who snitches to the stormtroopers about Obi-Wan; Kamobi and Luke being in the Mos Eisley cantina; and Death Star detention block guard, Corporal Prescott. In 1983, Diamond appeared in *Return of the Jedi* as an Imperial blaster scout.

He was also the stunt coordinator for *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981). His other movie credits include the first *Highlander* film, *The Princess Bride* and *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*

Diamond made himself available to the fan community and in recent years participated in many science-fiction events around the world, including Celebration II.

For more information about Diamond and his impressive career, visit his official website at <http://www.petardiamond.co.uk>.



The Sound of Applause for Star Wars Alum

Gary Rydstrom Given CAS Lifetime Achievement Award

Former Skywalker Sound director of creative operations Gary Rydstrom was honored in February with a Cinema Audio Society career achievement award.

A veteran sound designer, Rydstrom was nominated for this year's Oscar for sound design for his work on *Finding Nemo*. He was presented with the award at the 11th annual Cinema Audio Society Awards ceremony in Los Angeles after a series of tributes from indus-

try admirers such as Steven Spielberg, George Lucas and Ben Burtt, John Lasseter, Randy Thom, Ron Judkins and Chris Boyes.

Hollywood Reporter reports that at the ceremony Rydstrom praised Lucas for having "done more for sound than anyone I can think of." He also "thanked his wife for understanding why he recorded the sounds of the family dog eating dinner," according to the *Reporter*.

Rydstrom recently left sound mixing to accept a director's chair at Pixar Animation Studios. ☺

Fan Club Dinner

Meet & Eat

The first official *Star Wars* Fan Club dinner had members enjoying an elegant dinner with *Star Wars* actresses Michonne Bourriague (Aurra Sing) and Amy Allen (Aayla Secura) at a restaurant atop a downtown Seattle hotel.

Fan Club officials in attendance were president Lisa Stevens, *Insider* editor-in-chief Dave Gross and *Insider* associate editor Vic Wertz.

In addition to rubbing elbows with the actresses and members of the *Insider* creative team, attendees were treated to an autograph session with the actresses, a souvenir ticket and a bag of *Star Wars* goodies.

After dinner, fans were allowed to ask questions of both the actresses and the *Insider* staff.

"Michonne and Amy talked at great lengths about their behind-the-scenes experiences filming their parts in the *Star Wars* movies, complete with great little anecdotes," Stevens says.

"The Seattle show was a real hit! The private dinner was really sweet," Bourriague says. "The fans were great, and it was in a very

intimate setting, which allowed us to all chat and get to know one another."

"The Seattle dinner was memorable. We had a beautiful room atop a downtown Seattle hotel with a fantastic view of the city," Allen says. "We had a nice evening, and the people were lovely. I extend my thanks to everyone who came."

"Fan Club gatherings are a wonderful way for *Star Wars* fans to get together and share their love of the films while also getting to hang out with some of the stars from the movies," Stevens says. "As we all know, the fans are the most important part of the whole *Star Wars* experience, and these meals are one way for us to encourage fans to get out and celebrate the *Star Wars* phenomenon." 🌟 – Lisa Stevens



The Seeds of Success Lucas Honored by Visual Effects Society

George Lucas was honored recently at the second annual Visual Effects Society Awards in Hollywood when he received the society's first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award.

The innovative filmmaker was the subject of a series of short tribute films. In one of these – a computer-animated tribute featuring characters from *Toy Story* – Pixar CEO Steve Jobs said Pixar Animation Studios grew from one of the "seeds" Lucas had thrown "over his shoulder," according to the *Hollywood Reporter*.

Another film presented a montage of films Lucas had made as a film student at the University of Southern California. The

tribute film was created by director Randal Kleiser (*Grease*), who attended the USC Film School with Lucas.

Other tribute films – by Steven Spielberg, Sony Pictures Imageworks and Flash Filmworks – were also shown, says the *Reporter*. Lucas was then praised by director James Cameron (*Titanic*), who spoke of Lucas' revolutionary contributions to digital filmmaking and presented Lucas with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Founded in 1997, the Visual Effects Society is comprised of "distinguished visual effects artists and technologists who are professionally committed to the specialized industry of visual effects." 🌟

STAR SIG

After starring in *Kinsey*, the upcoming film about famed sex researcher Dr. Alfred Kinsey.

LIAM NEESON

(Qui-Gon Jinn) will appear as the villainous Henri Ducard in *Batman Begins*. Also starring are Christian Bale (*Equilibrium*) as Batman; Michael Caine (*The Statement*) as Alfred; Morgan Freeman (*Bruce Almighty*) as Lucius Fox; Katie Holmes (*Pieces of April*) as Wayne's childhood friend; Cillian Murphy (*28 Days Later*) as the Scarecrow; Ken Watanabe (*The Last Samurai*) as Ra's al Ghul; and Gary Oldman (*Bram Stoker's Dracula*) as Lieutenant James Gordon. Christopher Nolan (*Memento*) will direct the film from a screenplay by David Goyer (the *Batman* series).

Neeson also appears in the next film from Ridley Scott (*Gladiator*), *Kingdom of Heaven*, in which he plays a character called Godfrey of Ibelin. In the film, set during the crusades of the 12th century, a young blacksmith leads the people of Jerusalem in defense against the Crusaders. Orlando Bloom (*The Lord of the Rings*), Eva Green (*The Dreamers*) and Jeremy Irons (*And Now ... Ladies and Gentlemen*) will star with Neeson in the war drama.

Once upon a time in a mythical place called Cape Kennedy, an astronaut named Tony Nelson went up on a space mission – and now, almost 40 years later, his exploits are coming to the big screen. As is Hollywood's wont these days, the hit TV series *I Dream of Jeannie* is being made into a motion picture – and who's going to play the amorous, hijinks-laden Jeannie? The Internet Movie Database recently reported that it



might be none other than Hollywood's newest rising star and former handmaiden **KEIRA KNIGHTLEY** (Sabé). The role, made famous by Barbara Eden, is perfect for Knightley, according to an insider – "Keira is obviously in big demand at the moment and was simply the number-one choice for the role." The actor who will portray Major Tony Nelson, originally played by

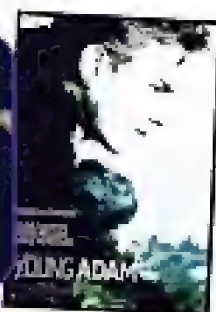


Larry Hagman, has yet to be announced.

Knightley was recently working on the 2005 film *The Jacket*, co-starring Adrien Brody (*The Pianist*), Kris Kristofferson (*Blade*), Kelly Lynch (*Charlie's Angels*) and Jennifer Jason Leigh (*In the Cut*). The film, directed by John Maybury (*Love Is the Devil*) and produced by George Clooney (*Intolerable Cruelty*) and Steven Soderbergh (*Traffic*), tells the tale of a wounded Gulf War veteran who believes he is traveling through time to find his lover.

And more great news for the former handmaiden – according to Scotland's *Sunday Mail*, Ms. Knightley is the Queen of Hollywood, beating out Carrie-Anne Moss and Halle Berry, among others. Her films *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*, *Love Actually* and *Bend It Like Beckham* have catapulted the young starlet to the top of the box-office draw, with the films raking in more than \$451 million in the U.S. Her star will keep rising,

with the sequel to *Pirates* already announced and many other projects on the way.



EWAN MCGREGOR (Obi-Wan Kenobi) was up to his usual good deeds recently – Ananova News reports that McGregor was to take part in a game of Lazer Tag for charity. Businessman Chris Gorman paid \$46,000 for the game. All money raised from the match will be donated to Children's Hospice Association Scotland and Sargent Cancer Care. Gorman said, "It's not the sort of thing that Ewan normally does, but I asked him if he would be up to it and he agreed. I haven't decided yet whether it will be kids or grown-ups who take him on." He added, "We want a reenactment of *Star Wars*, but this time Obi-Wan is going down."

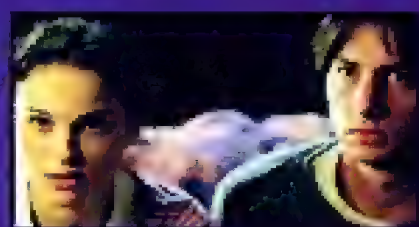
In other news, McGregor is going to be a published author. Atria Books recently announced the acquisition of the publishing rights for *Long Way Round*, McGregor's trip around the world on motorcycle with his friend Charley Boorman. The book, which will be written by McGregor and Boorman, will be a personal account of their transcontinental trek.

Ever wonder what happened to Biggs Darklighter? Actor **GARRICK HAGON** has been working with another fan favorite – none other than the titular character of *Doctor Who*. The *Star Wars* alum has been

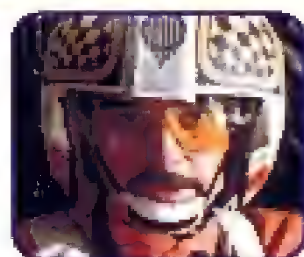
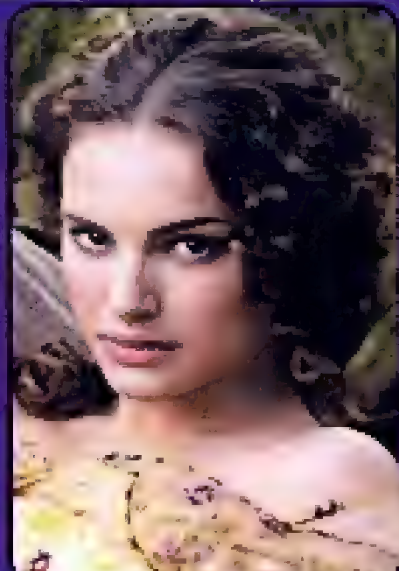
H TINGS

by Benjamin Harper with Vic Wertz

NATALIE PORTMAN (Senator Padmé Amidala) had a big victory at the most recent Sundance Film Festival. Distributors Miramax and Fox Searchlight pictures jointly purchased *Garden State*, in which Portman plays a character named Samantha. The film, which received great reviews at Sundance, has been described as a contemporary echo of *The Graduate*. The soundtrack even includes a Paul Simon song.



Movie still from *Garden State*.



working on a radio version of the hit British TV series and appeared recently in a story called "The Axis of

Insanity." What is the Axis? According to Big Finish, the company that produced the show, it's "a twisted playground where reality, morality and sanity no longer apply." The Doctor and his companions, Peri and Erimem, stranded within a "dimensional nexus," must conquer the Axis before reality as we know it crumbles. Hagon plays a character called the Jester in this story, which takes place between the TV serials "Planet of Fire" and "The Caves of Androzani."

In case you were wondering, **CARRIE FISHER** (Princess Leia Organa) came in third place in her stab at *Celebrity Poker* (see "Star



sightings," *Insider* 75). She also recently told *Today* show host Katie Couric that she wanted to "play Princess Leia again, at this age," while pointing to herself. Turn to "Star News," page 15, for more about Fisher and her new novel, *The Best Awful*, a sequel to her popular *Postcards from the Edge*.

MARK HAMILL (Luke Skywalker) will star in the film *Through the Moebius Strip*, a story



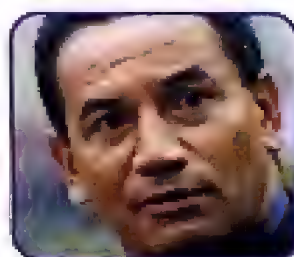
about a boy who travels to an alien world to save his father and learn of his destiny. Jonathan Taylor Thomas also

stars in the film, set for release sometime in 2004.

TEMUERA MORRISON

(Jango Fett) recently broke his leg in two places after falling from his Harley-Davidson.

Morrison, who spent several days at the hospital, is resting and recovering from the break. We wish him a speedy recovery.



Thor '70s Show recently cast **BILLY DEE WILLIAMS** (Lando Calrissian) as Pastor Dan in the episode

"Baby Don't You Do It." Donna complains to the padre that "Eric sometimes likes to talk too much about *Star Wars*." Fortunately for Eric, Pastor Dan has seen the light, noting "Star Wars is the greatest movie of all time. It's hard not to talk about *Star Wars*." And Dan is a man who practices what he preaches — he also delivers a sermon on the challenges of faith, "much like Han Solo's faith in his sometimes unreliable *Millennium Falcon*." ☮



In last issue's "Star Sightings," *Insider* incorrectly ran a photograph of Christopher "Darth" Walken beside a news item on Jack Thompson (Clegg Lars). The Sith are entirely responsible for the error.

PREQUEL

PREQUEL UPDATE



They Did It All for the Wookiee

Rick McCallum on Pickup Shooting, Walking Carpets, and Clone Commanders



Producer Rick McCallum was just hours away from catching a flight to Sydney, Australia, when we last met with him for an interview at Skywalker Ranch. It was a sunny and warm Northern California spring day, and McCallum looked happy as he relaxed for a few minutes on the front porch outside of his office. In short: The post-production work on *Star Wars: Episode III* was going very well.

"I'm very happy," McCallum said. "Things are really starting to come together. We're really close to having the first assembly of the film completed, which I'm thrilled about. I expect we'll have the screening for that within the next two weeks. And I'm really excited about what's

happening at Industrial Light & Magic. We're starting to see serious shots every week now, including some of the first space battle shots, which are looking great."

Just that morning, McCallum – along with director George Lucas, ILM visual-effects supervisor John Knoll, animation director Rob Coleman and other key staff – met in ILM's "C Theater" in San Rafael to watch the latest run of "dailies." ILM offered up sequences that will take place all throughout *Episode III* – including some opening space battle footage that had advanced far beyond the rough version viewed by the same audience just a few weeks prior.

UPDATE

FOR EPISODE III

by Jane Irene Kelly

"That looks terrific," Lucas told the group.

"Very, very cool," added McCallum.

Lucas asked the ILM team to refine a few elements in the battle sequence, and then the group's attention shifted to an action-packed, animatics-only sequence featuring several Wookiees. The timing was serendipitous as McCallum was going to Sydney that night specifically to set up the "Wookiee shoot." Filming will take place in mid May.

"No Wookiee footage was done when we were in Sydney last year," said McCallum. "We just weren't ready to do it. First, we had to find people tall enough to play the Wookiees, which we did, eventually — we hired some basketball players. After that, it took six months to build their Wookiee suits."

According to McCallum, seven Australian basketball players will be involved with the Wookiee shoot, and at least one of those individuals likely will travel to another location in the future to participate in the filming of scenes that include Chewbacca (played by actor Peter Mayhew). But for now, McCallum said the key is setting a date for the May shoot, which looks as if it will only take one full day of filming to complete. May 17 is being considered for the shoot,

continued on page 24

Stunt performers often step in for the principals when practical effects, such as these explosive squibs, are used on the set. Photo by Ralph Nelson Jr.

Hayden Christensen (Anakin Skywalker) consults with his behind-the-scenes mentor, Stunt Coordinator and Fight Master Nick Gillard. Photo by Ralph Nelson Jr.





Waiting in Supreme Chancellor Palpatine's office complex, are (from left) Senator Padmé Amidala (Natalie Portman), a Mon Calamari official (Paul Davis), Senator Fang Zee (Warren Owens), and Senator Mee Dee (Joe Chu). Photo by Merrick Morton.

As cowardly as they are, you can't seem to shake off Neimoidian officials from a Star Wars prequel. Photo by Ralph Nelson Jr.





No, Director George Lucas isn't giving a Padawan some dance lessons, but is showing Hayden Christensen his blocking for this scene on the Senate landing platform on Coruscant. Photo by Paul Tiller.

Hayden Christensen (Anakin Skywalker) and Director George Lucas look at the playback of a shot in Episode III. Photo by Ralph Nelson Jr.

continued from page 21

he said, because it works well around the schedules of some of the basketball players who will be involved with tournaments at that time.

In addition to filming the Wookiee scenes in May, McCallum said they have asked Temuera Morrison — who played Jango Fett in *Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones*, and is the face for many a clone trooper — to come in for some pickup shooting. Morrison is a New Zealander, and McCallum said it just makes more sense for him to travel to Sydney in May than to fly to London in August for the bulk of pickup shooting.

"In London, I expect that we will shoot for two six-day weeks, and it will take us four to five weeks before that to prepare for it," said McCallum. "Right now I can tell you that we have asked Hayden Christensen (Anakin Skywalker), Samuel L. Jackson (Mace Windu), Ian McDiarmid (Supreme

Chancellor Palpatine), Ewan McGregor (Obi-Wan Kenobi) and Christopher Lee (Count Dooku), to join us for the pickups in August."

McCallum emphasized that pickup shooting is not "reshooting" of scenes — instead, the scenes that will be filmed will be "additional material." He said, "We will be filming all new scenes, which we've thought about, but haven't written completely. Right now, we are still in the process of cutting scenes. Again, this is why we have to view the first assembly to get an idea of what we need to have where."

Meanwhile, as McCallum was getting ready to leave for Australia, famed cinematographer and director Ron Fricke — who directed the acclaimed 1992 film *Baraka*, and is currently working on Francis Ford Coppola's latest film project, *Megalopolis* — and Carl Miller — visual



Senator Padmé Amidala, pregnant and torn by conflicting emotions and loyalties, tries to figure out some solutions to the problems that trouble her. Photo by Merrick Morton.

This holographic projector in the Jedi Temple briefing room has some important story points to reveal in *Star Wars: Episode III*. Photo by Paul Tiller.



effects director of photography for *Star Wars: Episode II* – were in Thailand filming background plates for *Episode III*. According to McCallum, additional background plates will be filmed in Switzerland in early August, and China also is being considered as a location.

McCallum said Miller would join him in Sydney in May to serve as cameraman for the Wookiee shoot, and would also go to London in August for the pickup sessions.

As of early April, Lucas, and editors Roger Barton and Ben Burtt, were all keeping to their daily routines at Skywalker Ranch, according to McCallum. Lucas was meeting with Burtt each morning, and Barton in the afternoon, to go over parts of the film that have been returned for approval by the Animatics Department at Skywalker Ranch, and are

nearly ready to be sent to ILM for refining, and also, sequences that the animatics team had not yet received.

In other news: Just after McCallum left for Sydney, Lucasfilm announced that *Star Wars: Episode III* would be released in the U.S. and Canada – with a near-simultaneous release around the world – on May 19, 2005. In Japan, *Episode III* will be released in July, the traditional month for *Star Wars* premieres.

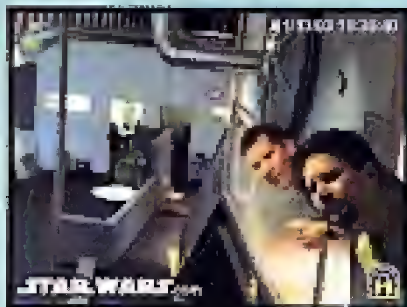
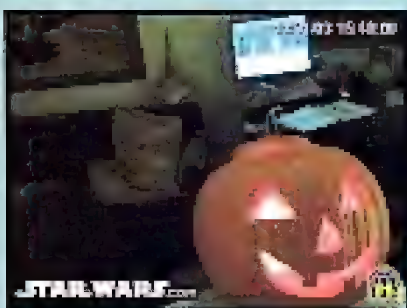
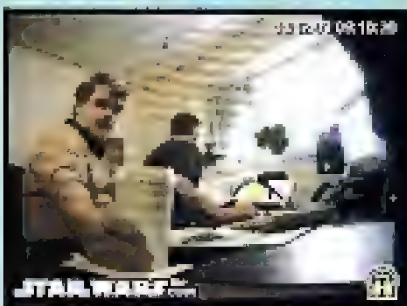
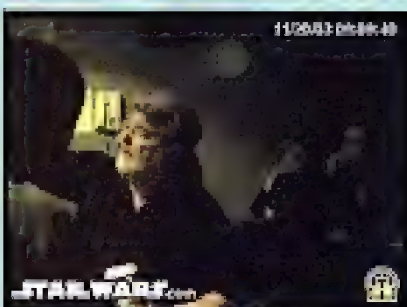
Exact information for other countries outside of the U.S. and Canada will be coming shortly, so keep checking starwars.com – and reading *Star Wars Insider* – for full details about the release of *Episode III* as May 2005 approaches. ☾



Director George Lucas and others on the production team track how shots are going in real time from this "video village" on the set at Fox Studios Australia. Photo by Ralph Nelson Jr.

Adam Johansen (Costume Prop Maker) works on one of Padmé's elaborate headpieces for *Star Wars: Episode III*. Photo by Paul Tiller.





JUMP TO HYPERSPACE STAR WARS.com

by Pablo Hidalgo, internet content provider
edited by Paul Ens, director of Lucas Online

Webcam

Since returning from Australia, the webcam has followed Episode III to its quieter new homes at Skywalker Ranch and Industrial Light & Magic. Though watching a movie's long postproduction process may not be as big a thrill as watching production on the set, fans nevertheless wanted the webcam to be there as Episode III begins its journey through postproduction.



Chat Excerpts Genndy Tartakovsky & Paul Rudish



Ramsbean: How much of what you proposed for [the Clone Wars micro-series] story was deemed "off-limits" by Lucasfilm?

Genndy Tartakovsky: Actually, none of it. They gave us really soft guidelines. The only things that changed were some of the planet names. Everything else ended up being kept the same.



Paul Rudish: They just gave us the timeline and some of the characters they'd like featured in it. They liked what they saw.

Jedi Master Obiwan Kenobi:

Who was the hardest character to portray in the Clone Wars cartoons?

Paul Rudish: Hmm ... maybe Anakin? He was the hardest to design.

Genndy Tartakovsky: I think he has the most depth—because we know where he is going. And because he has so much depth, you always want to hint at what he's to become.

Paul Rudish: But you can't take that too far. We were requested to make him the young hero, so we couldn't take that too far.

Genndy Tartakovsky: It was a really fine line that we had to walk. Also, because of Anakin's personality, he's a little rebellious or bratty, and that's always a harder character trait to portray. Obi-Wan is heroic and stoic and a natural hero, but Anakin is almost an antihero.

Jedidiodess1130: Do you think some of the animation cells will be offered for sale to fans here?

Genndy Tartakovsky: Unfortunately, the way we do animation these days is that we draw it on paper, and then it gets scanned into the computer, so there are no cels. But I think there might be some collectors' cels made.

Ant Skywalker SC: Would you like to do an Indiana Jones cartoon?

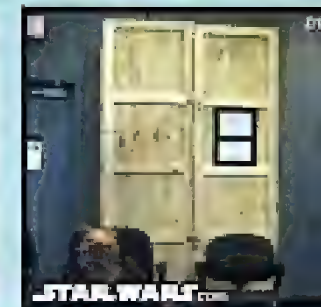
Genndy Tartakovsky: Sure, that would be fun!

Paul Rudish: Yeah! I like drawing robots better than drawing men in fedoras, but it sounds cool.

Genndy Tartakovsky: He's such a great character that it would be fun to do.

Sarr Reldin: Will we see the Clone Wars micro-series on DVD?

Genndy Tartakovsky: Hopefully, like everything that gets produced, it will eventually end up on DVD. I hope so, but there are no official plans yet.

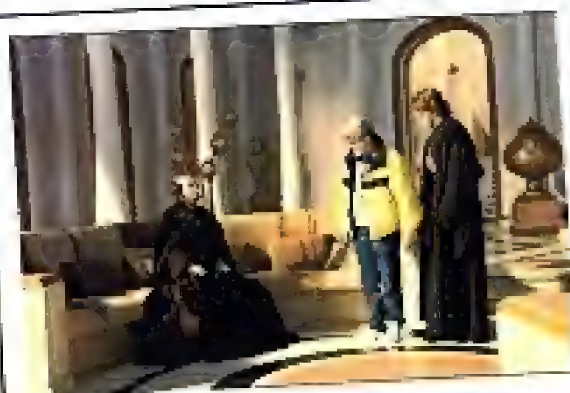
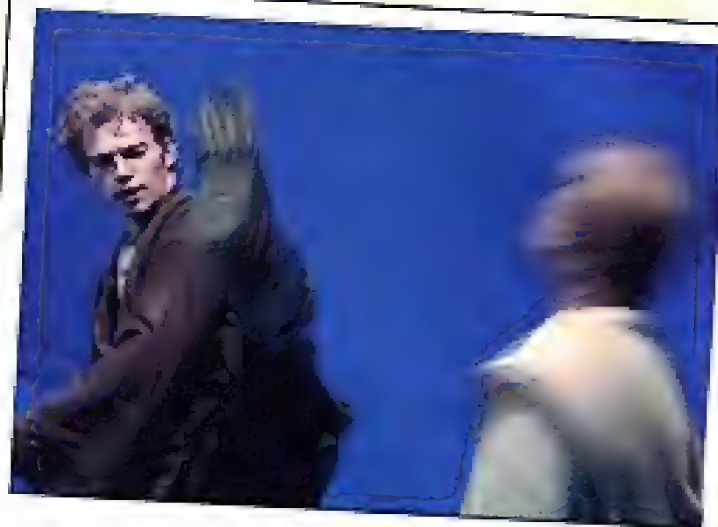


Opening Battle Jan. 14, 2004

For a few tantalizing seconds, this ILM theater has become a time machine to 2005. The familiar rolling snare drums of the "20th Century Fox Fanfare" leads to the sparkling Lucasfilm logo, which gives way to the "A long time ago..." title card. There's a blare of horns that marks the beginning of the classic John Williams "Main Title" music, as the yellow words "Star Wars" scroll away into infinity. The opening crawl follows, explaining the current state of the galaxy - followed by a working movie title that might or might not ultimately be the final one. Then the camera moves towards the warships, and we're transported to the middle of a battle already in progress.

Like the battle, the film itself is still a work in progress: ILM has yet to add anything to the sequence. It has temporary music, temporary sound and temporary digital effects provided by the Animatics Department at Skywalker Ranch. And although the effects have a remarkable sophistication - many could easily be scenes cut from a video game - they're not meant to be the finished product. For example, the engine wash streaming from the new Republic cruisers are not yet hazy cones of volumetric light, but instead are sharp conical spires sticking out of the thrusters like luminescent icicles.

As the camera dives through the space battle between capital ships, it's easy to become disoriented. Yet, visually, it's all about geometry. As George Lucas gives direction, he frequently refers to the "triangles" and "circles". The Republic craft are the rectilinear wedge ships of the original trilogy, while Separatist vessels are more ovoid in shape, with smoother lines and reclined angles. The most familiar vessels amid the Separatist flotilla are the Trade Federation battleships - "donut ships," as they are affectionately called.

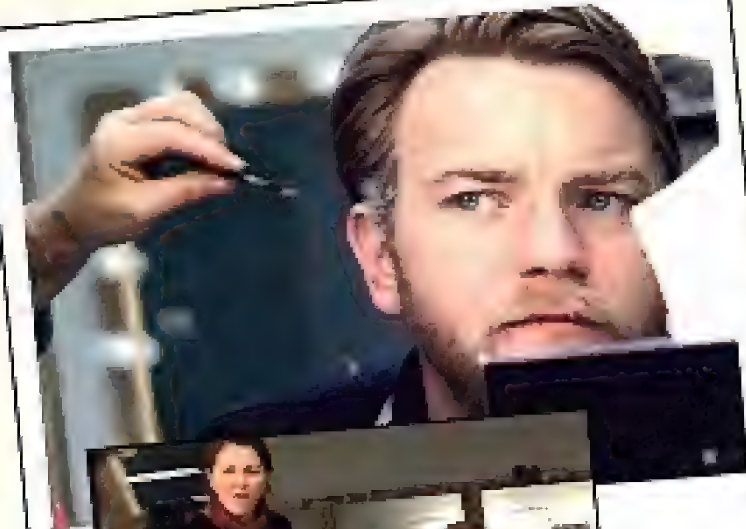


Filmed in Hologscope Jan. 21, 2004

"In the original films, we noticed that the holograms had some color, but in Episodes I and II, they're just blue," says visual-effects supervisor John Knoll. For the holograms slated in Episode III, they'll have a hint of color. So if Darth Sidious, Mace Windu, Ki-Adi-Mundi or even Darth Vader makes a call, they won't be so blue.

There's also the curious fact of the angle at which these holographic characters appear. So far, they've always been portrayed head-on. But for one shot in Episode III, as Obi-Wan watches a holographic image, the camera angle is slightly higher, looking down. How do the scan lines read when you're looking at this angle? All the holographic characters we've seen so far are covered with horizontal lines to represent projection. But that didn't look right, so the ILM visual-effects team adds curves to those lines that define the hologram's three-dimensional contours.

As for why holograms have suddenly become more colorful, no one seems to be sweating it too much. "This is a different model," explains Lucas, referring to Obi-Wan's transmitter. "This is a Sony." ☺



by Jenny Scott

Blue Sky

"I'm not sure that picking a film apart to tell who did what is a good thing," says Star Wars Episode III concept artist Iain McCaig. "It defeats the collaborative nature of the enterprise." McCaig's words strike a theme heard repeatedly as Star Wars Insider talked with five Star Wars artists about their work on Episode III.

While the artists interviewed – Ryan Church, Sang Jun Lee, Iain McCaig, Erik Tiemens and Derek Thompson – are rightfully proud of their own creative contributions, they insist that the real magic of the Episode III concept art arises from their collective imagination.



Erik Tiemens



Ryan Church

inspiration is job One

It's revealing of the Art Department's team-oriented culture that McCaig, whose imaginative work led to some of the most memorable characters, creatures and costumes of Episodes I and II, seems reluctant to boast. "There were things I designed that others inspired," he says, "and vice versa."

Indeed, inspiring others is what concept artists get paid to do, and chief among their job duties is to inspire Star Wars head-of-everything George Lucas.

The conceptual process begins in pre-production in an atmosphere known at Skywalker Ranch as "blue sky." Says Episode III concept design supervisor Erik Tiemens, "Early on in pre-production, it's Ryan Church [the other concept design supervisor] and me coming up with ideas for different environments. That process serves as a jumping-off point for George."

Church, who designed many of the new alien cultures and technologies in Episode III, says that those initial, scriptless months were among

his favorite because there were so few limitations. "Basically, the job was to try and wow George, [and] I was happy to oblige," he says.

At times, Lucas had a specific idea that he wanted rendered visually – a new Jedi starfighter or a new nemesis, for example. But he left other ideas wide open for the artists to flesh out. "He needed to have several planets for the Clone Wars to take place, along with the vehicles and droids on each world," remembers Church, who designed two of Episode II's main Geonosis ground-battle vehicles: the AT-TE and the hellfire droid.

Church says he showed Lucas as much as he could in the early pre-production days of Episode III. "I created illustrations that showed what I thought would be a cool shot in the movie, scenarios complete with settings, vehicles, characters – everything," he says. "It was so much fun that I'd constantly work late, making sure there was plenty to look at in our weekly meeting."

As ideas begin to take shape, a crew of concept artists, model-makers and sculptors joined Church and Tiemens. (This group

My Minds

The Artists of Episode III



Iain McCaig



Derek Thompson



Sang Jun Lee

Included Robert Barnes, John Goodson, T.J. Frame, Warren Fu, Feng Zhu, Alex Jaeger, Michael Murnane and Danny Wagner. Each week, their task was to create a concept for a specific element or a design for Episode III.

"Most of the time we had four days to do concept work for a presentation to George on Friday morning," explains concept artist Sang Jun Lee.

As before, sometimes Lucas didn't give the artists much to go on, while other times he was very specific. McCaig explains, "If it's one of the times you know that George is looking for input, you go as boldly as you dare, throwing out your worst nemesis or your most bizarre universe."

Lee, who specialized in character and creature design, describes his typical pre-production work week: "The first two days I spend on rough sketches and finding good references for new ideas," he says. "And then I start to draw detail, sketching from the rough sketch or references to produce seven to 15 drawings. On the last day, I scan

the drawings and work on painting them with Adobe Photoshop and Painter [two computer applications]."

Lee's use of both traditional and electronic tools is common in the Art Department. Many artists start with traditional materials to get their basic ideas down on paper and then scan their work into the computer for digital fine-tuning. Lee typically starts with ink for his rough sketches and uses a Prismacolor or graphite pencil for the detailed drawings. Once the drawings are in his computer, Photoshop lets him block general shapes, while Painter allows him to detail those shapes and add textures.

However, some artists develop a distinct preference for either traditional or electronic methods. "I'm pretty much a Luddite," admits artist Derek Thompson, whose work was largely storyboards and key-frame art. Thompson, who comes from a comic-book background, favors pencil, pen and marker. "I enjoy working electronically," he says, "but I've found I can accomplish a lot with traditional means."



Art on pages 32-33
by Eric Tiemens

Others, like Church and Tiemens, work electronically from the get-go. "Drawing and painting on the computer is so fast that there's really no barrier between me and the painting," says Church. "I use an electronic pen and tablet that lets me work exactly as I would with traditional media. It's completely intuitive and very fast, and I can try variations very easily. The program I use lets me paint quicker and more experimentally than I ever could with real paint."

As an artist, Tiemens finds that working electronically allows for "more of a direct flow from what you're imagining. When you're painting traditionally you have to be more careful and thoughtful. The materials can become a barrier to getting your concept done. In film, we've got short deadlines, and the artwork is really about conveying an idea, a concept, or the lighting and color, and that kind of thing. The actual process of crafting becomes less of an issue."

Whether they are created by electronic or traditional means, the designs and drawings at this stage are often very informal, barely more than sketches. "A great deal of my work is really gritty and foundational," explains Thompson, "intended to get the idea across and not so much about a pretty final image. I'm talking rudimentary Post-It sketches – large quantities of them."

Church says that he approaches new assignments intuitively: "I'll close my eyes and think about it for about a minute or so and just start drawing shapes, making darks and lights on the page."

This creative work sometimes begins with informal brainstorming sessions. As Tiemens remembers, "We'd get together around tables and brainstorm and joke, laugh and bring in books and point out movies. Things like that really got our sessions unlocked and flowing." But while all this freewheeling "play time" is fun for the artists, it's also important work. Their freeform sessions are crucial for producing the highly imaginative, detailed worlds, creatures, vehicles, characters and costumes *Star Wars* fans love.

The Royal "We"

The Art Department's congenial environment does not occur accidentally – it's by design. As on all things *Star Wars*, the ultimate designer is George Lucas. The Episode III artists are passionate in their praise of their boss and seem deeply grateful for the director's emphasis on collaboration and mutual inspiration.

"George Lucas is probably the most collaborative director I've ever known," says McCall, who treasures the concept artists' non-hierarchical camaraderie. When the artists and designers come together, everyone's creative input is valued, he says.



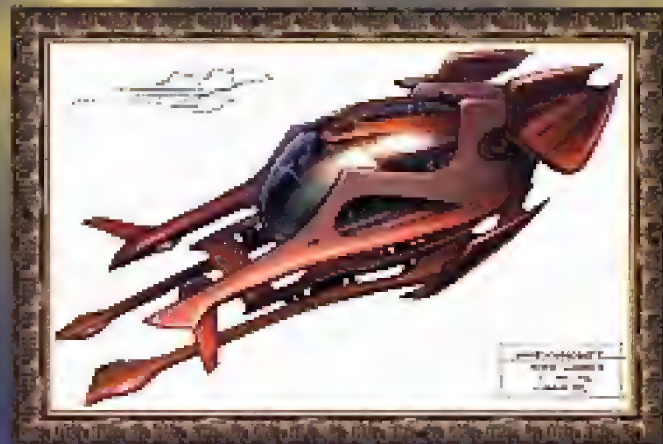
George is more open to letting us present our own ideas before he starts to specify what he wants.

"On Episode III, I continued to work as I have since the first prequel: in close collaboration with my colleagues but responsible only to George," McCaig explains. "The fact that there are two officially titled concept design supervisors, a production designer and a costume designer creates the impression of a hierarchy that for me did not exist."

Although many ideas initially originate in Lucas' imagination, when it comes to crystallizing them into usable concepts, he is a true collaborator with the artists. "It's really fun to interact with George and show him ideas and get his input," says Church. "There's always something refreshing – a different way of seeing and the combination of things that he brings to the table that's illuminating."

Another thing Church cherishes is the creative freedom Lucas encourages, and even demands. "[When an] idea comes from George, usually he'd tell me what he was thinking, like 'This character needs a speeder' or 'That guy's base is on this type of planet.' But sometimes he would say 'Design an interesting location for a battle' or something else nonspecific. That was great fun, trying to show him something really new. And I was surprised by how hard he would push for something completely new. He'd be the first one to notice if I was being too conservative with my design. It's so fulfilling as a designer to be pushed that hard by your boss."

Such a high level of freedom is unusual in the entertainment-art world, according to Lee, who, like many of the Episode III concept team, has worked as an artist for several other films, including *Men in Black II*, *The Hulk* and *Peter Pan*. "I'm used to hearing from other directors [exactly] what they want, but George is more open to letting us present our own ideas before he starts to specify what he wants. It brings more responsibility and opportunity to the artist."



Art on page 34 by Ryan Church

Still, as Thompson points out, "It's a fun responsibility!"

Perhaps Lucas works so well with artists because he is, fundamentally, an artist himself. "It's great to work for someone who really values art and design and lets you know it," Church says. But like any artist, the director has some unusual methods – inspiration can strike at any time.

Lee recalls a day when Lucas phoned the Art Department excitedly from his car. "He was driving down a street in San Francisco and came up with an idea for a creature. At that instant he called us on his cell phone to give us direction for the type of character that he wanted to use." From that phone call, the first character development officially started for a character who may appear in Episode III – though Lee won't say who it is, only remarking coyly, "It was a wonderful and exciting experience for me."

The Saga Continues ...

At the Friday meetings, Lucas often singles out an element from an illustration for approval: a vehicle, a droid, or an architectural detail. But when the director approves an entire illustration, it can really thrill an artist. "When George gets inspired by a piece of art that I created, it's a good day, Lee says."

Element by element, illustration by illustration, the look of each sequence in the film comes into focus. The conceptual process is

like putting together a jigsaw puzzle: Ultimately, the art comes together in what Tiemens calls a "visual script," which the film crew uses as a guide when shooting. The paintings answer questions and resolve details about each sequence, some of which film viewers might barely notice, such as what time of day it should be, the nature and direction of the lighting, and what kind of weather might be occurring.

One of the challenges of concept-art work is that it must often convey a huge amount of story, character development and other information in what might ultimately amount to only a few seconds of screen time.

"For this film, the designs have to be extremely strong," says Church. "My approach to designing is [based on the fact] that you have to know a lot of information at just a glance: Does this object or location belong to the good guys or the bad guys? Which species does it belong to? How does this thing work? Is this a safe place or a dangerous place? Good, bold design can help answer these questions and therefore help tell the story. That's why most of my designs start as lit, colored paintings – so I can best see how the subject will look in the movie [and not just] on a white page."

Because the story is not finalized at this point, putting the big picture together can become a delicious challenge for the art team,



Art on page 35 by Iain McCaig

The film is really like a sketchbook that's filled with collages that you're looking at again to see how it all comes together.

especially since artists are typically assigned to work on one isolated piece of the puzzle at time.

McCaig says that the artists can't help trying to get inside [Lucas'] head to "see the movie through his eyes," but it's not easy. "It should have been a lot easier this time around," he reflects, "since we were finishing rather than starting the puzzle. However, looking for those last few pieces that actually fit was maddening because we were so close to seeing the big picture."

As Lucas approves elements and illustrations at the weekly meetings, the artists begin to get a sense of what kinds of things appeal to him. From there, it's a process of designing scenes in detail - and refining existing designs - for the Animatics Department and Industrial Light & Magic to use in building models and creating fully rendered shots. However, the artists' work isn't necessarily over when they've worked out the concept bugs and ILM gets in the game, partly because the "bugs" are never completely worked out. Tiemens says that the terms "pre-production" and "post-production" are misleading because making a film is seldom a linear process.

"It's weird because we go into this middle zone of 'Wow, something needs to get reshot,' or George might decide he has this whole other idea for a sequence and scraps an earlier idea, and so we'll do a little pre-production even in post-production. That happened a bit on Episode II with the droid factory and even the end battle. They weren't really locked down until much later."

"The film is really like a sketchbook that's filled with collages that you're looking at again to see how it all comes together and how each page contrasts with the other pages," Tiemens adds.



Left and center art by Derek Thompson

Art by Mike Murnane

A World of Pure Imagination

"The biggest challenge is simply the huge amount of work required to design a movie of this scale," says Church. "My goal on Episode III has been to live up to the extremely high standards set by the other films. That is the biggest daily challenge about my job, but also, the source of my greatest satisfaction. There's just so much to do and seemingly so little time to do it in!"

Lee agrees. "Every day you constantly have to keep bringing new and unique ideas. That's the tough part. In one year we created more than 5,000 pieces of concept art for the movie. In all my years of working in this industry, I have never seen this amount of art work for one feature film."

Another challenge for the Art Department was providing a visual "bridge" between Episodes II and IV. In McCaig's case, those "bridges" were major characters in the story. "Helping Anakin and Obi-Wan age and transform has been a designer's delight," he says, "but Padmé's final incarnation was one of the most emotional creative challenges I've ever had to face."

Church cites another visual bridge: the new film's many worlds. "Episode III will be a design feast!" he says. "We visit a lot of different planets and locations this time. It's a great challenge (and great fun!) to design all those different worlds – to design so many different cultures and technologies, and keep them each fresh and distinct from one another. In some cases it was very important to make sure that certain designs were very carefully linked and bridged between Episodes II and IV."

For his part, Lee singles out a never-before-seen race of creatures as his favorite addition to Episode III. "My favorite character, though, is a Wookiee."

Naturally, the artists are delighted when a concept they propose makes it to the final film with few changes. And in Episode III, several of the locations Church proposed during the blue-sky phase of design "have proceeded through to final without modification," he says, "as have many of my vehicles, droids and other designs. That's very gratifying."

Tiemens marvels at how fast the time flies from concept to final cut. "The most amazing thing is that you can be so intimate with a shot that you designed – and then when the movie comes out, and it really works with the music, the scoring and the sound effects, on a large scale, it's very impressive," he says.



Art on page 37 by Sang Am Lee



It's a great
I challenge
(and great fun!)
to design all
those different
worlds and keep
them each fresh
and distinct
from one
another.

In the end, all five artists seem most pleased with their collective work and thrilled to have been a part of such a huge creative, collaborative endeavor.

"I am proud to have been a part of the saga, period," says McCaig. "It means a lot to me to see the story through to its end. It is always a pleasure, and an honor, to be invited into the creative process for Star Wars."

This feeling is common among all the artists, including Tiemens, who remembers begging for a Star Wars sketchbook when he was a boy. "All of us have those kinds of stories up here," he says, "and so we're seeing the inspiration come full circle." He muses, "I think the bottom line is that more of us should share in the act of being creative on team projects — it's just exhilarating. I think it uplifts everything." ☺

A Closer Look at the Artists

Fans can find more of the artists' work at their personal websites, many of which also provide biographies and information about their non-Star Wars professional credits. You might also find announcements about upcoming appearances at conventions and elsewhere. Some of the artists are happy to hear from fans by e-mail as well.

Ryan Church: www.ryanchurch.com

Iain McCaig: www.iainmccaig.com

Derik Thompson: www.derikthompson.com

Erik Tiemens: www.watersketch.com

LOOKS GOOD ON PAPER

Mastering the Art of Star Wars Origami in Four Easy Lessons

by Christopher Alexander

The ancient art of origami dates back at least to A.D. 600, when a Buddhist priest introduced Chinese papermaking methods to Japan. The Japanese imagination saw shapes and forms in the paper, and over the next few centuries origami artists learned to "set them free" with a type of sculpture made by folding paper.

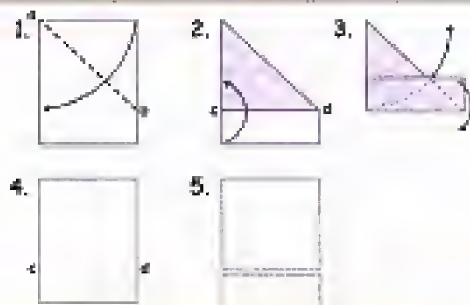
Now you can free your favorite classic Star Wars icons too — all you need are some sheets of paper and our simple instructions.

Lets Get Started

You can use any paper for these models, but origami paper colored on one side is ideal. For each shape, read the instructions completely before you begin, and use the diagrams to help visualize each step. It's important to note that the diagrams do not represent exact images of how your origami should look as you fold it, but rather represent the motion of the folds. For example, in the center of the top diagram, the edges of the paper do not appear to line up, but when properly folded you should see your paper line up perfectly with a sharp point on top.



As you make each fold, keep the next step in mind. Work slowly and carefully: Be sure to line up each fold as accurately as possible, especially in the earliest stages of your model. When making a crease, line it up exactly at the corner or point, and line up the edges along another edge or crease. Once you have the fold lined up, be sure to crease the paper sharply by running your fingernail along it a few times. The tighter your crease, the easier the next step will be.



Making a Square

Origami is traditionally folded on square sheets of colored paper. You can find this relatively inexpensive paper in most craft stores and even some bookstores. But almost any kind of paper will do, as long as it is cut into squares. To make a square from a rectangular sheet:

1. Make a mark fold along line AB.
2. Make a valley fold along line CD.
3. Unfold to step one.
4. Cut off the bottom along line CD.
5. You now have a perfect square.

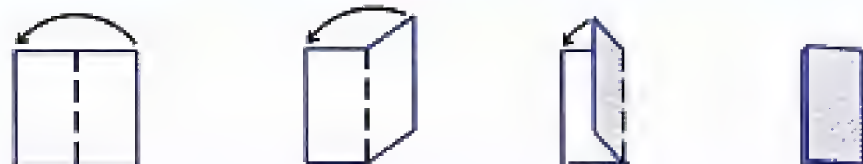
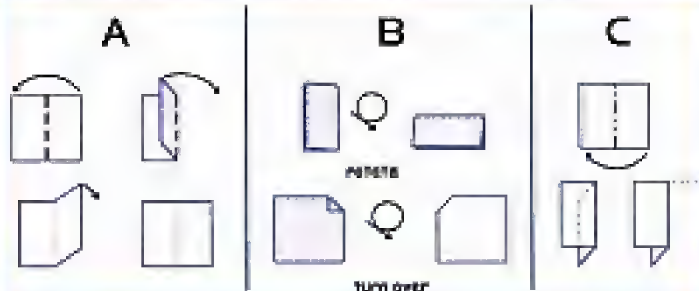
Key to Folding Symbols

A. Existing Crease: a thin line that represents a crease created by a previous step and is for reference in the current step only.



B. New Orientation: a symbol indicating to flip the paper over or rotate the figure to a new position.

C. X-Ray Lines: dotted lines that represent a fold or edge beneath another layer of paper or an imaginary extension of an existing line.



Glossary of Origami Folds

Creating origami figures requires that you learn just two folds: the valley fold and the mountain fold. All other folds are simply combinations of these two.

The Valley Fold

The valley fold is the most common origami fold. Crease the paper along the line as you fold one side toward you, forming a "valley."

The Mountain Fold

The mountain fold is the exact opposite of a valley fold: Fold the paper away from you to form a "mountain."



Other Folds

The Mark Fold (not shown) The mark fold creates a light crease to use as reference for a later fold. Lightly fold along the indicated line, then unfold. Ideally, the crease will not be visible in the finished model.

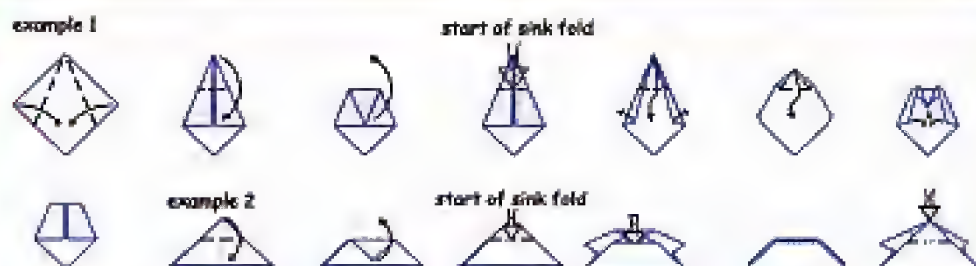
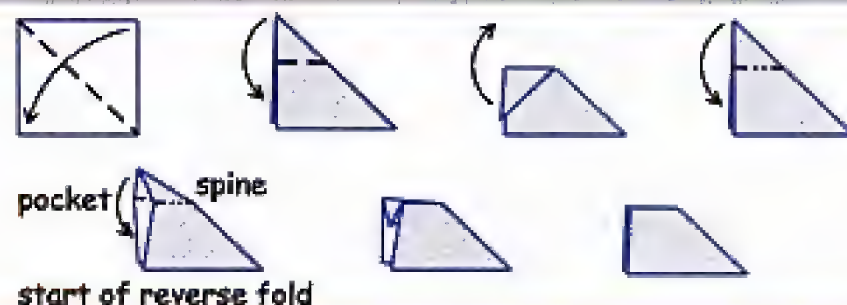
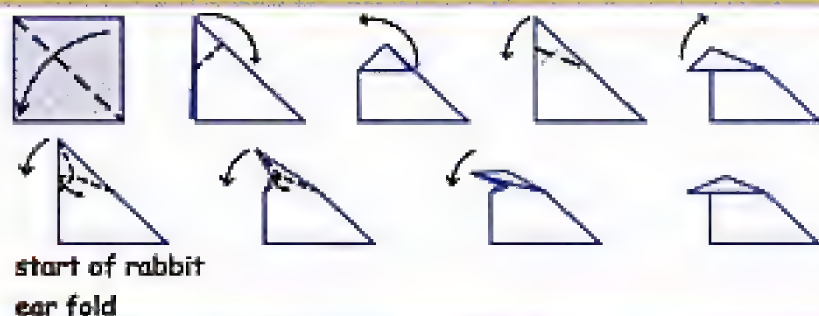
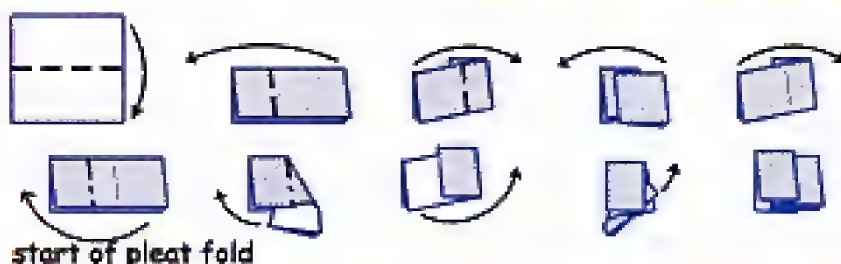
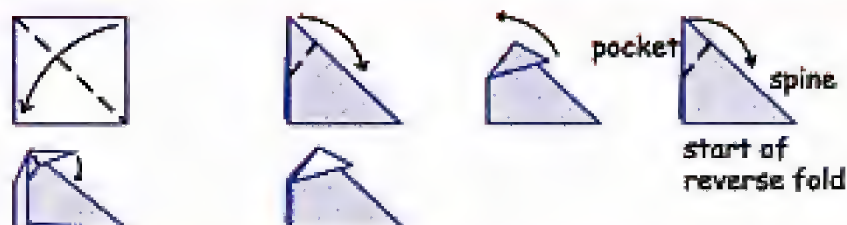
The Outside Reverse Fold Open the pocket slightly and flip the point backward over the spine along existing creases.

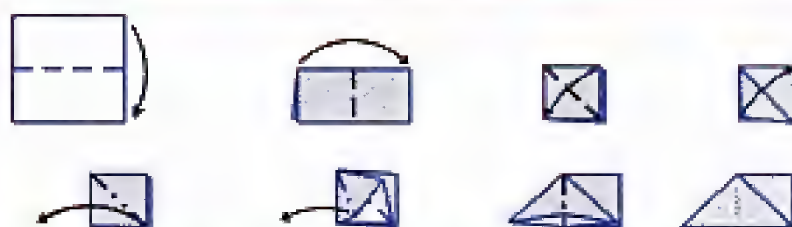
The Pleat Fold Pleat folds resemble the pleats on a skirt when finished. Think of a pleat fold as two reverse folds.

The Rabbit-Ear Fold The rabbit-ear fold narrows a point. In this example, use the bottom half of the two existing creases to form two new creases: the valley fold from the point to the center, and the mountain fold from the center to the edge.

The Reverse Fold Put your finger inside the pocket to hold it open, then push down on the spine of the section to be reversed until the section is folded inside itself along existing creases.

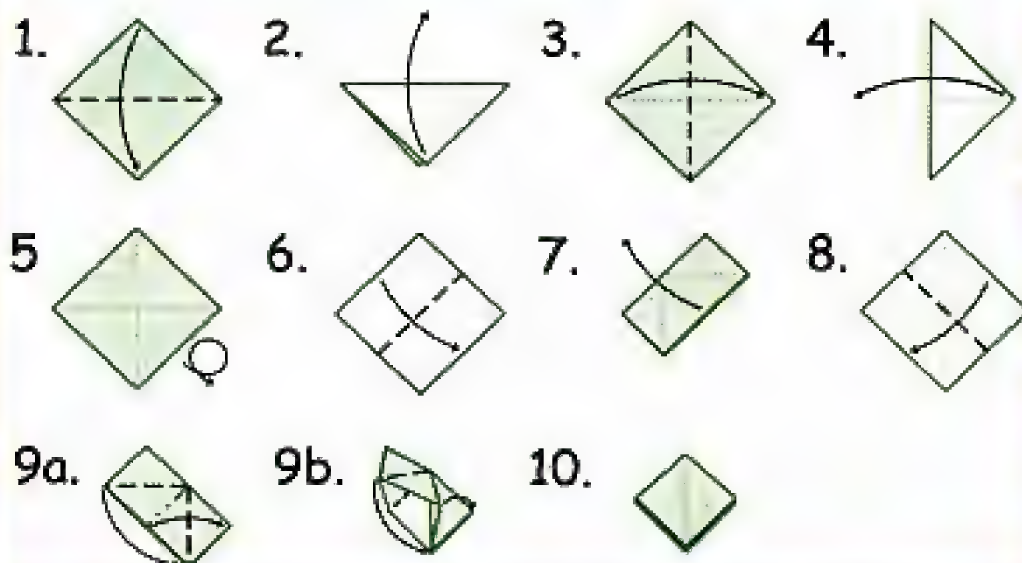
The Sink Fold A sink fold requires unfolding a portion of the model. Push the section to be sunk inside out along existing creases and reform the model. No new creases are added.





start of squash fold

The Squash Fold: Form a squash fold by lifting one edge of a pocket and re-forming it so that the edge becomes a crease while an existing crease becomes a new edge.

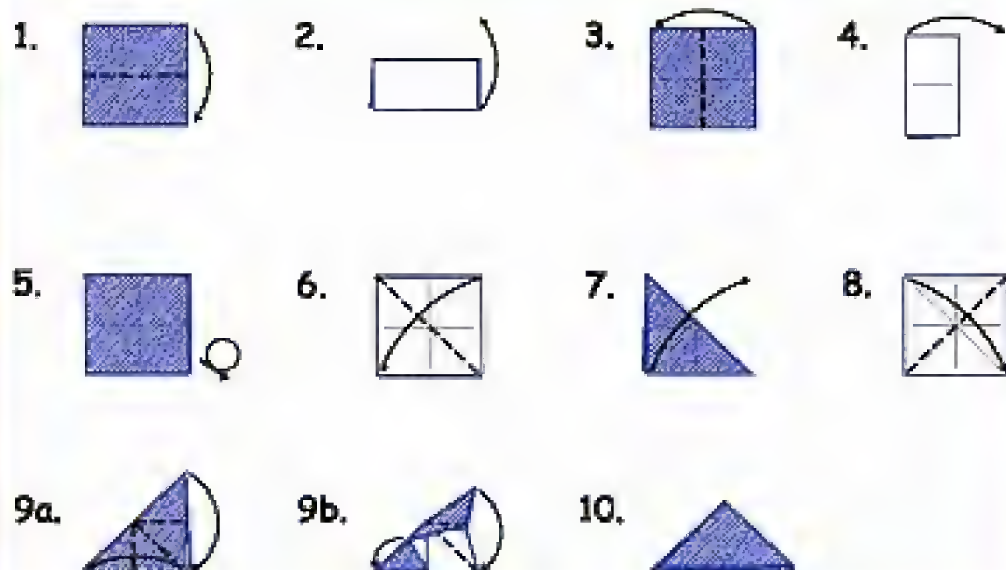


Two Basic Origami Shapes

Two important shapes form the basis for many other origami figures. Master them and you will have taken your first step into a larger world.

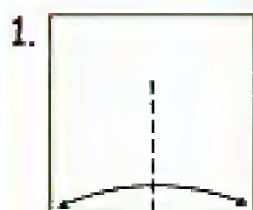
The Bird Base

1. Start with the colored side up. Valley fold.
2. Unfold.
3. Valley fold.
4. Unfold.
5. Turn the paper over.
6. Valley fold.
7. Unfold.
8. Valley fold.
9. Squash fold. Halfway through the step.
10. You now have a bird base.

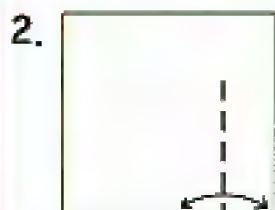


The Waterbomb Base

1. Start with the colored side up. Valley fold.
2. Unfold.
3. Valley fold.
4. Unfold.
5. Turn the paper over.
6. Valley fold.
7. Unfold.
8. Valley fold.
9. Squash fold. Halfway through step.
10. You now have a waterbomb base.



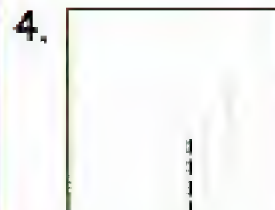
Start with the colored side down.
Mark fold.



Mark fold.



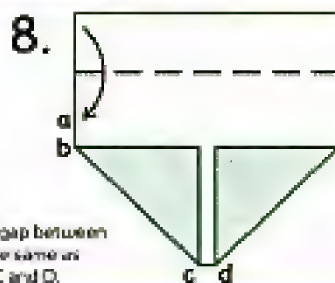
Mark fold.



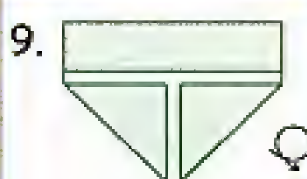
Mark fold.



Repeat steps one through six on this side.



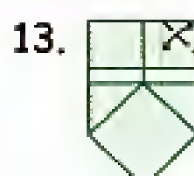
Valley fold. The gap between A and B is the same as between C and D.



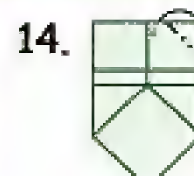
Turn over.



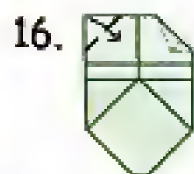
Valley fold. Unfold to step 11.



Valley fold and unfold.



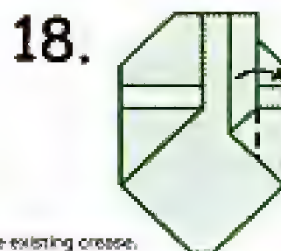
Reverse fold.



Valley fold to match the right side.



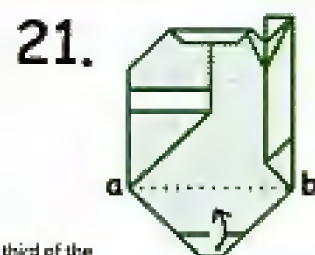
Valley fold on the existing crease.



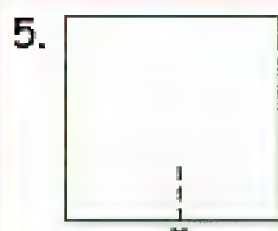
Valley fold on the existing crease.



Valley fold.



Valley fold a third of the way to line AB.



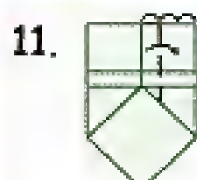
Mark fold.



Valley fold.



Valley fold to the midpoint.



Fold one third of the way.



Reverse fold the hidden triangle.



Mark fold.



Turn over.

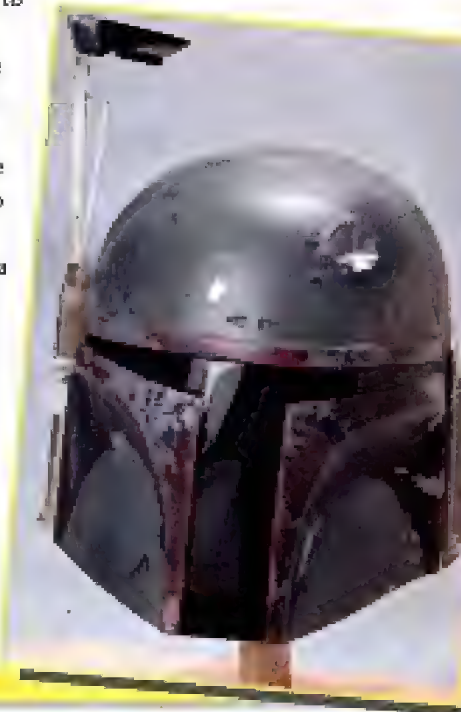


You've just made Boba Fett's helmet!

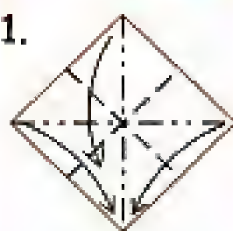
Boba Fett's Helmet

Boba Fett is the most notorious bounty hunter in the galaxy. While his armor may look battered and worn, it holds many surprises for his prey. Among its hidden weapons are rocket darts, a flamethrower and a whipcord launcher. It even has a rocket pack with a guided missile, but Fett's most effective weapon is his cunning. He prefers to outwit and trap his quarry.

When the *Millennium Falcon* escaped the Imperial starfleet, Fett anticipated Captain Solo's play. He led Darth Vader to Bespin, beating the Falcon to Cloud City. After Vader captured the Falcon's crew, Fett was given "a substantial reward." He was also allowed to take Han Solo to Jabba the Hutt for a second bounty. Two bounties for one capture, and he never needed to fire a shot.



1.



Start with a bird base (see "Two Basic Origami Shapes," page 41), colored side down.

2.



Valley fold and unfold.

3.



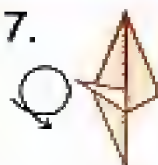
Squash fold. Repeat behind.

4.



Mountain fold so that edge AB rests against point C, and edge AC lies on point D.

7.



Turn the model over.

8.



Valley fold perpendicular to line AB.

9.



Valley fold the left side, allowing the horn to swing to the other side.

10.



Insert your finger into the top pocket and reverse fold to match the other horn.

13.



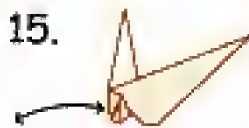
Valley fold to form the head. There are no guide folds. See step 16 for final shape.

14.



Valley fold.

15.



Unfold to step 12, then pleat fold on the existing creases.

18.



Valley fold. Repeat behind.

19.



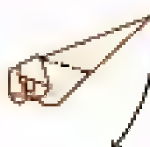
Valley fold, repeat behind.

20.



Unfold to step 17, then pleat fold on the existing creases. Repeat behind.

22.



Reverse fold.

23.



Valley fold.

24.



Valley fold.

25.



Unfold to step 23, then reverse fold on the existing creases.

5.



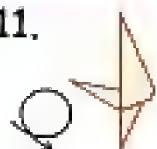
Unfold.

6.



Insert your finger into the bottom pocket and reverse fold to make the point white.

11.



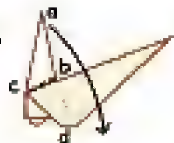
Rotate the model.

12.



Valley fold.

16.



Fold edge AB parallel to edge CD. Repeat behind.

17.



Valley fold. Repeat behind.

21.



Reverse fold.

26.



Reverse fold. Repeat behind.

27.

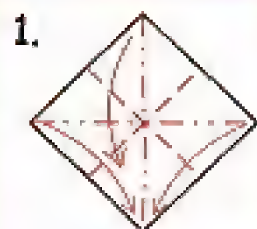


You have just created a bantha!

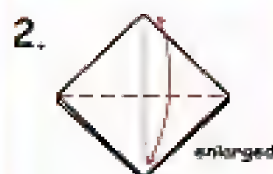
The Bantha

Banthas roam the deserts and the Jundland Wastes in herds of 15 or more. Their thick fur coats, long tails and curved horns help them survive in the hostile climate of Tatooine. The Sand People have domesticated banthas and use them primarily for transportation. When on raiding parties, they ride single file to hide their numbers.





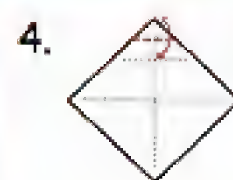
Start with a bird base (see "Two Basic Origami Shapes," page 43), colored side down.



Mark fold.



Valley fold and unfold.



Mark fold.



Sink fold the hidden triangle on the crease formed in step five.



Valley fold and unfold.



Sink fold.



Valley fold and unfold.
Repeat behind.



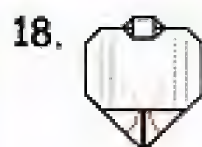
Valley fold and unfold.
Repeat behind.



Sink fold.
Repeat behind.



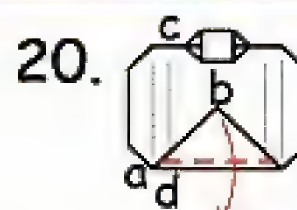
Valley fold and unfold.
Repeat behind.



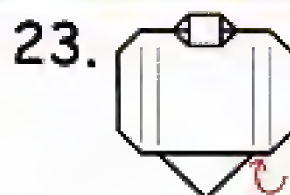
Outside reverse fold.



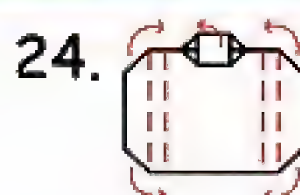
Valley fold.



Valley fold so edge AB lines up with crease CD.



Tuck this flap into the pocket over the center flaps.



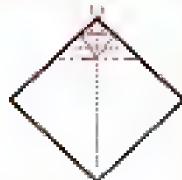
Rotate the cockpit halfway down.
Valley fold the wings into shape. Repeat behind.

5.



Valley fold and unfold.

6.



Sink fold on the crease formed in step three.

Darth Vader's TIE Fighter

This TIE fighter is the prototype for the next generation of TIE fighter. Flown by Darth Vader, it has hyperdrive capability, and angled solar panels that make it more maneuverable than the standard TIE fighter. Flying this ship, Darth Vader destroyed six Rebel starfighters in defense of the Death Star during the Battle of Yavin.

10.



Reverse fold the two hidden triangles.

11.



Valley fold.

16.



Mountain fold the top layer into the model.

17.



Valley fold even with the crease formed in step 15. Unfold.

21.



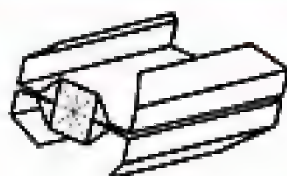
Tuck this flap into the pocket under the center flaps.

22.



Valley fold and unfold.

25.



You've completed Darth Vader's TIE fighter!

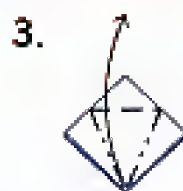




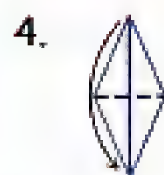
Start with a bird base (see "Two Basic Origami Shapes," page 4), colored side down.



Valley fold and unfold. Repeat behind.



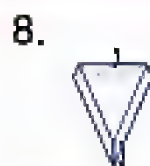
Squish fold. Repeat behind.



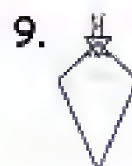
Valley fold. Repeat behind.



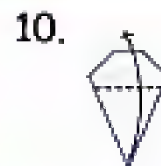
Valley fold even with edge AB in step six. Repeat behind.



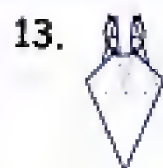
Unfold to step five.



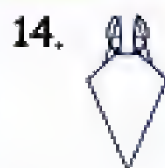
Sink fold.



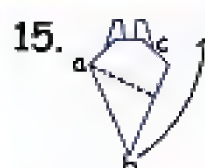
Valley fold on existing crease. Repeat behind.



Valley fold and unfold.



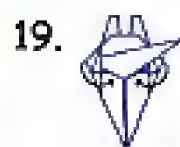
Reverse fold.



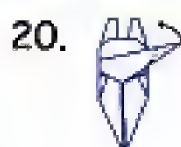
Valley fold edge AB to point C.



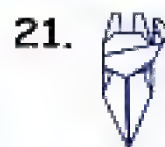
Unfold.



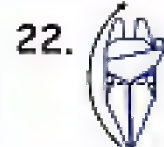
Mountain fold the bottom layer inside the model.



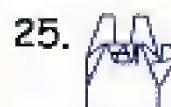
Reverse fold. There is no guide for this step. Start slightly outside the edge.



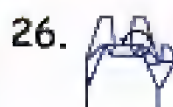
Reverse fold.



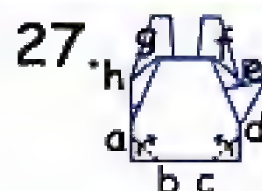
Valley fold.



Valley fold.



Tuck the flap into the pocket to lock the ship closed.



Reverse fold creases AB and CD so that ABCDEFGH forms a cycle.

5.



Fold in thirds.

6.



Repeat behind.

11.



Valley fold the top layer to the right and the bottom layer to the left.

12.



Pivot the triangles so that the inner edges line up with the halfway points.

17.



Rabbit-ear fold.

18.



Mountain fold the top layer inside the model.

23.



enlarged

Valley fold.

24.



Valley fold.

28.



You have built the Millennium Falcon!

The Millennium Falcon

Called "a piece of junk," "a bucket of bolts," "that thing" and "the fastest hunk of junk in the galaxy," the *Millennium Falcon* always breaks down at the wrong time, yet it always comes through in the end. Capable of reaching "point five" past light speed, she made the Kessel run in less than 12 parsecs, outran Imperial starships, escaped Imperial blockades, dodged through asteroid fields, and played a prominent role in the destruction of two Death Stars. In the words of her captain, Han Solo, "She may not look like much, but she's got it where it counts."

As with all art, practice makes perfect. If your first models look a little messy, just crumple them up, tell everyone they're pieces of the exploded Death Star, and try again. Happy folding! 🍷



The Old

Drawings by Robert Walter. Covering of www.starwars.com



Ralph McQuarrie's evocative designs not only defined the look of the original *Star Wars* trilogy, they also informed the designs of the prequels. The painting above, created for *Return of the Jedi*, was particularly inspiring to several of the Episode III designers.

There are few people associated with *Star Wars: A New Hope* who can say that their contribution helped make George Lucas' film a reality. But through his stunning pre-production artwork, Ralph McQuarrie helped the directors at 20th Century Fox see the power of Lucas' vision, resulting in the funding of a movie then known as *The Star Wars*.

The artist had moved to California from his native Gary, Ind., nearly a decade before his 1975 date with destiny, but the closest he'd gotten to the entertainment industry involved some jobs drawing movie posters and doing animation for CBS Television's news coverage of the Apollo lunar missions at a little company called *Real Three* – so named for the three artists who did everything.

While McQuarrie and his comrades were creating artwork of the moon's surface and Apollo spacecraft to help people visualize the

happenings on the dark side of the moon, from which no television broadcast could emanate, something amazing happened.

"A guy named Hal Barwood visited us in the early 1970s," McQuarrie recalls. "Hal needed some illustrations to help sell a film he wanted to do with his friend Matthew Robbins. He was trying to get into the film business at the time." And a good friend of Barwood and Robbins – George Lucas – was trying to get one of his pet projects off the ground.

"I didn't know that at the time," adds McQuarrie, who, at the ripe old age of 45, may have been having second thoughts about the wisdom of pursuing an art career. But all of that was about to change. "When George saw the drawings I had done for Hal and Matt, he was interested in talking to me. He visited with his friends at my place and talked about a big space-fantasy film he wanted to do. It didn't have a title yet. I showed him a proposal I'd worked on in 1972 for a science-fiction film called *Galaxy*. I imagined this lead-in with a transparent

MASTER

RALPH MCQUARRIE ON DESIGNING STAR WARS

by Ron Magid



Photo by Robert Moore. Courtesy of Starline Enterprises LLC



robot standing in a void, backlit, conducting a séance using this holographic machine that produced a three-dimensional image in a laser beam. Well, a couple years went by and George did *American Graffiti*. I never thought I'd see him again, and then one day he called to see if I'd be interested in doing something for *Star Wars*."

Soon, McQuarrie was sketching Lucas' heroes, villains and aliens from a dozen different worlds – not to mention the worlds themselves.

NEVER TRUST ANYONE OVER 30

Ironically, the artist who would forever change the look of science-fiction fantasy film wasn't particularly interested in science fiction. "When I was young, I'd look at the *Buck Rogers* comic strip, but I didn't think too much about it," he admits. "I'd worked for Boeing and was in love with airplanes and spacecraft, and I had an interest in fantasy architecture, although I hadn't thought about doing much in science

fiction. But I enjoyed working with Hal and Matt so much on their science-fiction film, I felt like that was really the place I should be. I had found what I should be doing."

McQuarrie may have been the first artist Lucas enlisted to visualize his futuristic fantasy, but McQuarrie's industrial-design background provided the template for later hires. Storyboard artist-designer Joe Johnston, modeler Steve Gawley and others all shared a working knowledge of industrial design, which enabled them to more easily extrapolate futuristic versions from contemporary equipment. What was different with McQuarrie was his age. "I was quite a bit older than most of them," he grins. "There was some sort of a rumor going around that there wasn't anybody over 30 working on [*Star Wars*], and I was 45. I never really knew what [the other artists] thought about that. I didn't see much of them. I worked at home until I started working on the matte paintings for *Star Wars*."

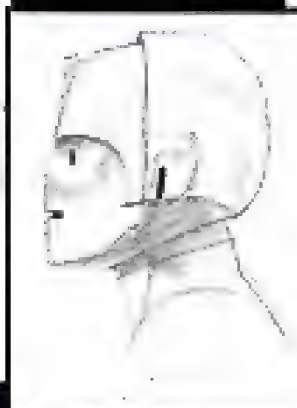
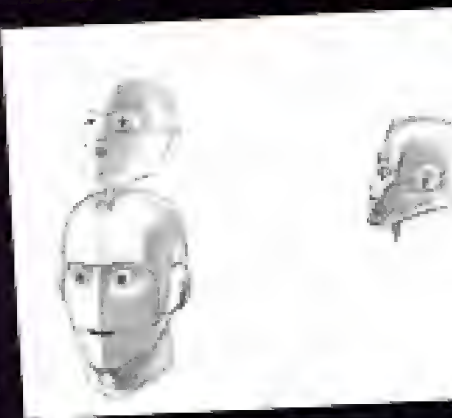


McQuarrie's hiring came not a moment too soon for Lucas and his fledgling project, which was almost stillborn after pitches to executives at United Artists and Universal were met with rejection. "I think it was a sin that those people looked at it and didn't grasp the scope of the images George wanted to relay," he says, shaking his head. "But they didn't see any drawings."

Lucas vowed never to depend solely on the imaginations of studio suits. He would use McQuarrie's illustrations to make it abundantly clear what his movie would look like. And, of course, when Lucas finally pitched *The Star Wars* to 20th Century Fox directors, he was armed with McQuarrie's fabulous paintings. (Fox production chief Alan Ladd Jr. had signed on two years before.)

But those famous images were the product of months of conferences followed by painstaking doodling that finally yielded some useful designs. "I started with little pencil sketches," McQuarrie remembers. "I'd sit with a pencil and dream about whatever I could imagine, sort of grotesque imagery. George would come by every week and a half or two weeks, look at what I'd done, and talk to me about what he'd like to see. I was reading the script to start with, but the script sort of got waylaid – the story was changing in his own mind – so George would just come and talk to me about what he wanted to see."

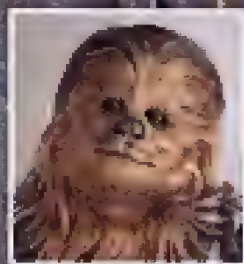
McQuarrie's early concepts for C-3PO owe a debt to the futuristic robot Maria from Fritz Lang's classic silent film *Metropolis*.



INSTANT ICONS

One of the most famous images was one of McQuarrie's earliest: C-3PO and R2-D2 in front of a cliff overlooking Tatooine. Beyond the fact that this painting perfectly captures the desert planet as portrayed in the film, it also communicates a tremendous sense of desolation and forlorn barrenness – a perfect metaphor for the emptiness of young Luke Skywalker's existence. "I think it does," McQuarrie agrees. "I think a lot of my ideas just float up from my subconscious mind like a bubble from the bottom of the lake. George wanted Tatooine to be a desert planet with twin suns and all these factors, so I was thinking, 'Desert ... extreme heat ... no plants ... just rocks and dust,' and all the business of Tatooine just came up in my mind."

While the look of Tatooine may have come easily to McQuarrie, the design of C-3PO was elusive, despite the fact that he was inspired by a very famous cinematic predecessor. "George brought a photograph of the female robot from *Metropolis* [1927] and said he'd like Threeplo to



look like that, except to make him a boy," McQuarrie relates, and indeed his first drawing looks like a breastless version of the robotrix. "Yeah, there's a lot of similarity [between the two] in my early sketches, but those were George's instructions. I had a feeling that Threepio should be more elegant and smoothly sculptural, but the truth is he wouldn't have been able to move. The joints and everything had to be solved [so he could] move."

While it's fair to say C-3PO's basic silhouette and sensibility came from McQuarrie's design, with more than a passing nod to Metropolis,

McQuarrie's designs for Chewbacca evolved as George Lucas refined his own vision of the character. In Lucas' second draft of *The Star Wars*, Chewie was a fanged alien wearing a flak jacket, brown cloth shorts and two chrome bandoliers.

the protocol droid's defining characteristic — that great face that looks perpetually surprised — was the work of production designer John Barry and sculptor Liz Moore.

"John, George and I had a meeting where John looked at my early sketches," McQuarrie recalls. "In a few minutes, he'd drawn on a little pad the look of Threepio's head with the big round eyes. It did have a sort of humorous aspect, and I thought that was very successful."

On the other hand, McQuarrie's sketches for Chewbacca are much closer to the finished product, thanks to creature maestro Stuart Freeborn. "George said he wanted Chewbacca to look like a lemur, so he had great big limpid eyes in some of my





early sketches," McQuarrie says. "George also gave me a drawing he liked from a 1930s illustrator of science fiction that showed a big, ape-like, furry beast with a row of female breasts down its chest. So I took the breasts off and added a bandolier and ammunition and weapons, and changed its face so it looked somewhat more like the final character, and I left it at that."

McQuarrie's sketch of Chewbacca's head is just a mass of hair surrounding a doglike nose and mouth, and Freeborn refined that design. McQuarrie points out that Freeborn's Wookiee is a bit leaner and its face a tad more defined than McQuarrie's version: "Well, to me it seemed he

Lucas described the Tusken Raiders as "marginally human" in an early draft of the script; the final costume emphasized the less human aspects of McQuarrie's design.



added a jawbone from one of the ape creatures he did for 2001: A Space Odyssey in the creation of Chewbacca's chin. Mine doesn't have a chin and his does, which is very important to the way it ultimately appears."

So is McQuarrie happy with Chewie's final design? "Oh sure," he grins, "it's Star Wars! It's the real thing."

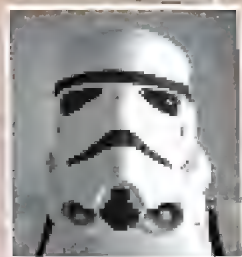
SCROLLS

Still, it's very different working conceptually versus for film, and McQuarrie feels that not all of his designs translated well to the screen. "Not always," he states, pointing to the gauze and metal protective masks of Tatooine's Sand People, which resemble McQuarrie's sketches but are decidedly more bug-eyed in the film. "They took the drawings I'd done of the Tusken Raiders and made their eyes tubular and projected them out further," the artist says. "They just kind of caricatured what I'd done."

Ditto his original stormtrooper helmet, which looks much more like a real fighter-pilot helmet than those in the film, which were made to look more like frowning skulls. "I liked my refined drawing of the stormtrooper's helmet, and it's somewhat grotesque in the film. The people who made the costumes took my helmet, hyped up certain aspects, and made sort of a cartoon of it."

Though much has been made of the influence of World War II fascist uniforms on McQuarrie's designs, the artist denies the influence was a conscious one while acknowledging that by calling the Empire's footsoldiers "stormtroopers," Lucas was deliberately suggesting something Nazi-esque. "It was supposed to be a tooled army that was very efficient, in a sense like the German army," McQuarrie says. "They can't hit a damn thing with their laser guns, but they're very efficient!" he laughs.

While McQuarrie was too young to fight in World War II, he remembers his friends' brothers going to England to fight the Battle of Britain, and he remains fascinated with the war. But he says his Darth Vader helmet design's similarity to a German combat helmet and gas mask did not occur to him as he was sketching early images of *Star Wars*' übermemeis. What he remembers instead is finding Lucas' original description of Vader at odds with the needs of the script. "George said he wanted a costume that would flutter in on the wind, sort of a dark guy in a black cape with a big helmet, like a Japanese warrior—maybe with black silk over his face or something like that," McQuarrie recalls. "But the script had Vader crossing between his spaceship and the Rebel



Blockade Runner and breaking into that spaceship from outer space, burning his way through a wall so he and his stormtroopers can come charging into this hallway. I thought, 'Gee, Darth Vader has to function in a vacuum,' so I suggested to George that [Vader] might have some sort of spacesuit to enable him to survive this trip through the vacuum, and George said, 'Well, okay, give him some kind of a breathing apparatus.' So along with the big helmet, I put a mask on him."

And what a mask it was – particularly in McQuarrie's early sketches, where Vader's breathing apparatus boasts a narrow "chin" and high "cheekbones" suggesting a skull, with the helmet perched low and sinister over the dark Jedi's black eye sockets, a look that communicates total malevolence. While McQuarrie's initial design was quite effective, the final helmet, though faithful to the skull-like visage, was a bit bulkier, which had an unexpected but welcome impact on the Dark Lord of the Sith.

"In my drawings, there wasn't any particular thought to his scale, and I thought he looked like a little, hunched, evil, ratlike person," McQuarrie explains. "Of course I liked my original design, but the guys on the English crew who made the costumes took it over and came up with a

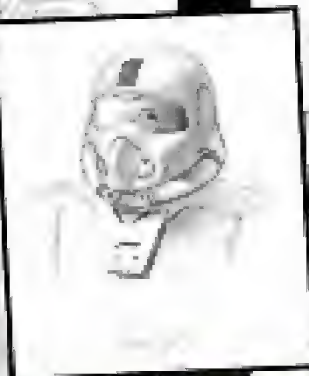
good idea – the concept of this huge, towering figure you had to look up at. I think that the big, tall, gigantic look was pivotal. It worked well in the film, so it's hard to argue with."

In fact, it's hard to argue with any of the changes to McQuarrie's designs at this point because the on-screen versions have become such a part of the *Star Wars* visual vernacular. Nevertheless, McQuarrie contends that some of his original drawings looked more real on paper than when executed on film, and he has some supersized fans backing him up – including George Lucas. "I continued to modify my original Vader idea when I had the chance, and I modified it again in an illustration I did for the original cover of the *Star Wars* novelization. George looked at the helmet and said it never looked better!" McQuarrie grins.

PAINTING BY DESIGN

Producer David O. Selznick first coined the term "production designer" to describe William Cameron Menzies' contributions to *Gone with the Wind*. In many ways, McQuarrie's role on *Star Wars* very much echoed what Menzies did – he drew everything, and the production scrupulously adhered to those drawings when setting up shots. Which leads to an interesting paradox: Although he was the primary visual conceptual-

Though it's not necessarily obvious in the finished product, Imperial stormtrooper helmets and Rebel fleet-trooper helmets evolved from the same set of designs.

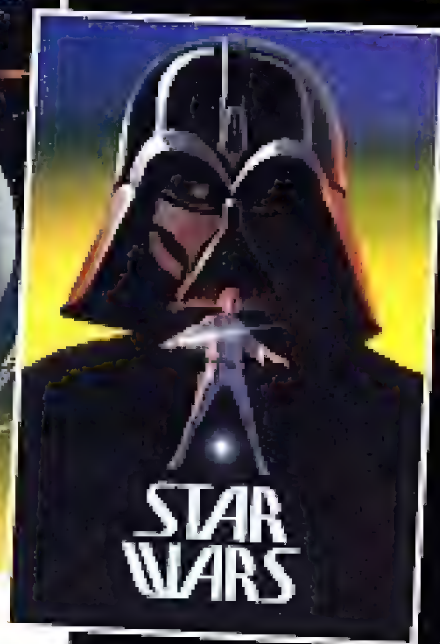


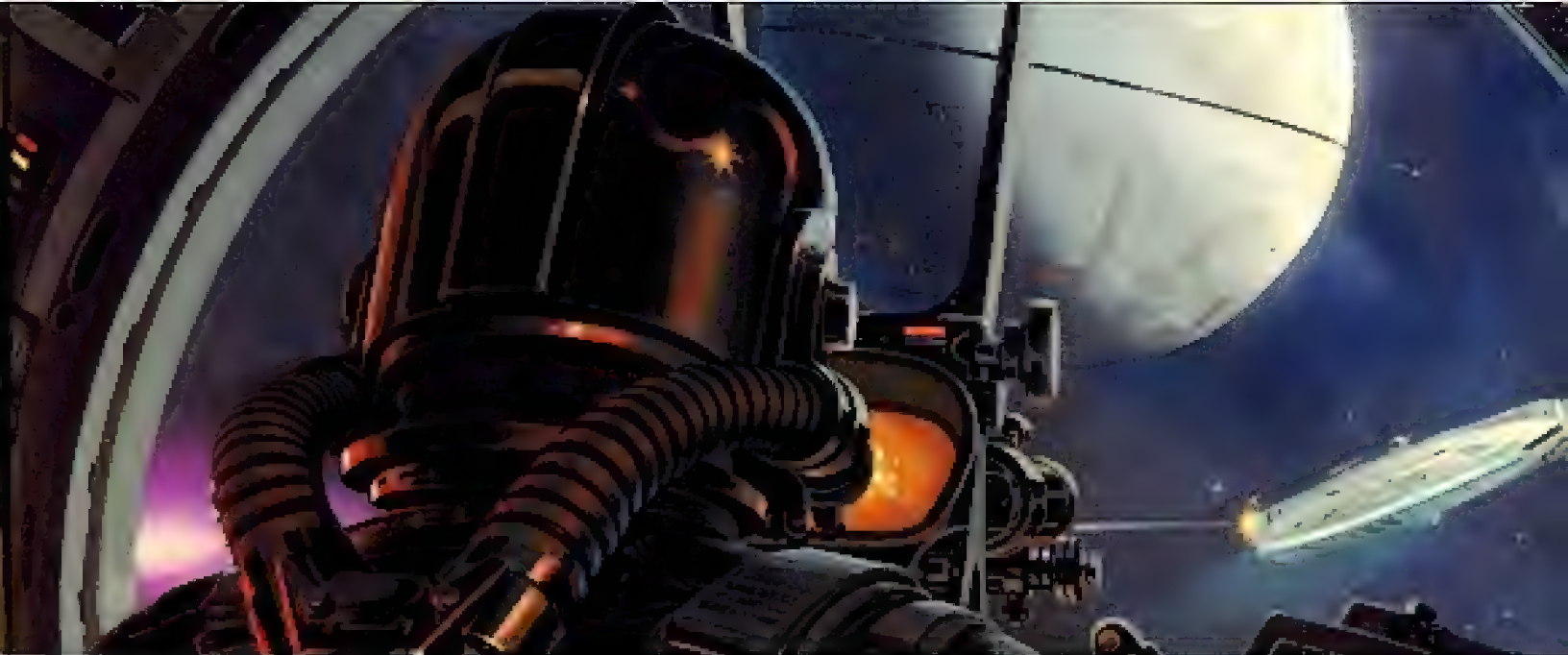


ist on *Star Wars*, McQuarrie doesn't consider himself a designer. Why? "Because I didn't work at it," the artist says. "But then *Star Wars* included the sort of stylized design I was interested in when I was at Art Center College of Design, which I never had a chance to work on commercially prior to *Star Wars*. It sort of wound up being mine because I was given the privilege of designing the sets, the costumes and everything else in the paintings I did for George's presentation to Fox."

He continues, "George and I didn't think the stuff that I did would necessarily be in the film, but he wanted me to show him what I thought would be an ideal solution for each scene. And it turned out he took those paintings along when he went to England to talk to the crew who designed the sets and costumes. And there they were, these paintings I'd done, up on the wall. I think they presented a pretty concise image of what

McQuarrie's favorite version of Vader appears in this book jacket art for the *Star Wars* novelizations.





the film could look like, so George could say, "This is what I want." They used quite a lot of what I had done in their designs."

And where would science-fiction fantasy film design be if Lucas hadn't met McQuarrie and asked him to do the preliminary concept work on *Star Wars*? The dramatic style and composition, the dynamic shapes of the characters in frame, and the use of color are uniquely McQuarrie's. "It seems so, doesn't it?" he reflects. "There might've been somebody out there who could've done what I did with George's direction. It's impossible to say. But my work is in there."

In fact, it's difficult when looking at McQuarrie's lush paintings not to help wishing that Lucas had been able to copy some of them a bit

more closely in the film. "Yeah, so do I," McQuarrie sighs, "and I think he does, too."

Looking back nearly 30 years later, what does McQuarrie consider his single greatest contribution to *Star Wars*? "Well, the paintings that I did were on hand the day that George had a meeting with the directors at Fox. The decision was made to go ahead with the film on the strength of George's idea and my compositions. That was my contribution right there." ☺

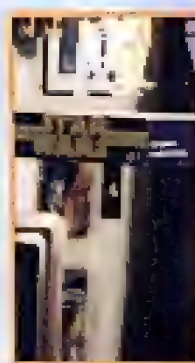
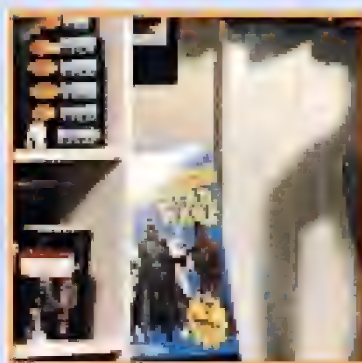
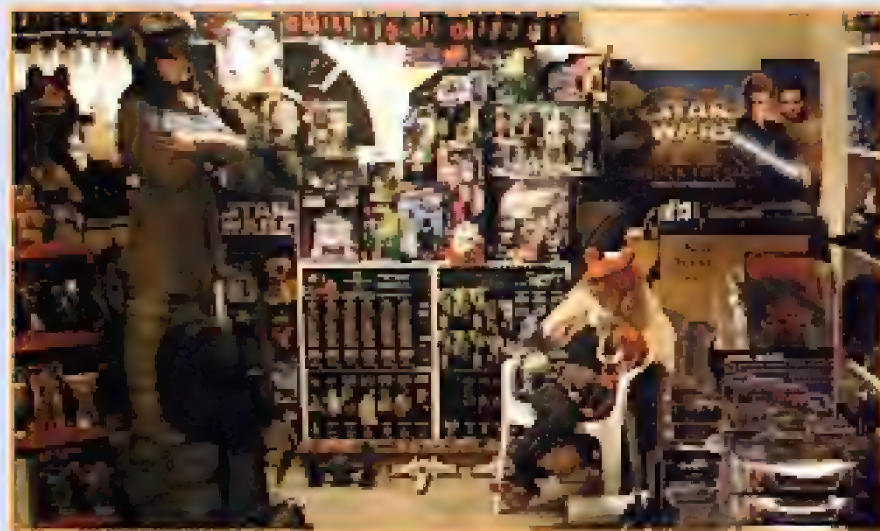
To learn more about Ralph McQuarrie, visit www.ralphmcquarrie.com.

The typographer who worked on this modcup poster lifted the credits from the 1974 film *Where the Wild Fern Grow*. (Thankfully, he didn't use that movie's tagline, "A True Story of a Boy and His Dogs.")



Think carefully about color in your display spaces. Take a sample of your room's focal point to your local paint shop. It could be an *Empire Strikes Back* lunchbox or a favorite poster or even a Polaroid of your collection – whatever you want to emphasize as the primary decorative element.

You'll have an abundant supply of color samples to ponder. Swatches that show ranges of related shades are useful for selecting coordinating colors – for a highlight color, look two or three steps lighter than your main color, and for a dark accent, select a value two or three steps darker than your main color. Generally, you'll want to repeat each color in at least three places in a room.



In the end, though, Haas stresses that all of these suggestions are just guidelines. "There are no hard rules," she says. "Whatever works, works. The big trick is that you need to make the home livable. You want to make it comfortable to live in, but you also want to see your stuff. You have to live in that house."

The importance of that balance is reinforced by Gus Lopez, a fan with one of the larger *Star Wars* collections on the planet. He and his wife, Pam Green, share a home that could easily be described as a *Star Wars* wonderland. "We try to balance having many nice items on display with a tastefully decorated house that is also livable," Lopez says. "We frequently get comments from first-time visitors that they're surprised that everything is decorated with adequate space and functional rooms."

Starting Small: A Child's Star Wars Room

The earliest challenge for most *Star Wars* fans is decorating a small space. For many of us, our childhood room is where the collecting bug bit and where our decorating mania took hold. All of the major collectors and fans started out in these small spaces.

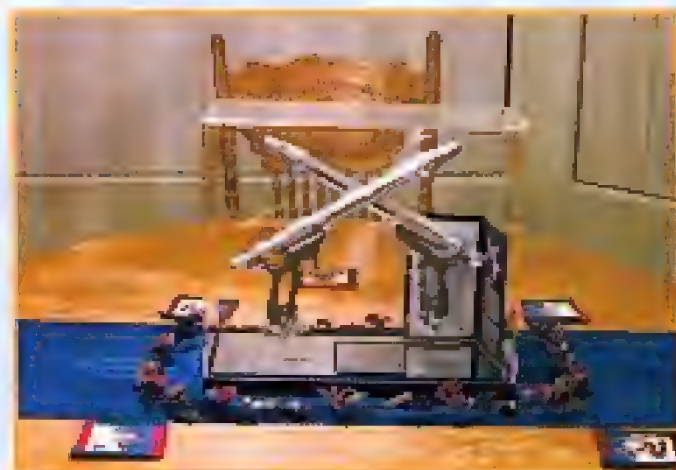
"Looking back," muses Lopez over photos of his childhood room, "it's actually fairly tastefully decorated. I never would have guessed I'd end up with over a thousand times the number of *Star Wars* collectibles I had 25 years ago. Look at all that underutilized shelf space!"

John E. Hudgens, winner of the 2003 *Star Wars* Fan Film Awards Audience Choice Award also started collecting in his childhood bedroom. "The room had these great bookshelves that ran the length of one of the walls," Hudgens says. "I had all the figures lined up along the longest shelves, even going so far as to take the name stickers that came in the cases Kenner made and mark their spots on the shelves. So after I'd try to wipe out my friend Marshall Isbell's *Star Wars* figure army with my figure army, the toys all went back to their respective spots on the shelves."



風

Brett Black spent years refining the presentation of his collection in his Tennessee home.



Above: Kristen Lila showcases a few prop replicas in her Arizona home. Below: Floridian Scott Will makes the most of a small space with his custom collection-in-a-closet.



Getting that first apartment doesn't mean everything is smooth sailing. Now you have to deal with *more* of everything: more rooms, more furniture, more space and more stuff.

The key to decorating and spousal negotiations is flexibility. Items likely to escape spousal purgatory include more tasteful pieces or single items of personal significance. That special figure given to you by a departed relative is more likely to find a home in the living room. The 82-D2 cookie jar is probably a safe bet in the kitchen.

Often, a single room is all you are able to procure for displaying your collection, so you are back to decorating a small space. Scott Will, a fan, costumer and PR officer for the Florida 501st Stormtrooper Garrison, has a creative solution for that lack of space in his office.

Whatever your situation, you are bound to be faced with the decision of what to do with each room. Again, work within the function of the room while leaving yourself room to live. For example, the entryway is one of the most important rooms since it's where you set the tone for the entire house.

That's where Gus Lopez has his Han Solo in Carbonite. Take it from Jabba the Hutt, there is nothing more impressive on a wall than Han Solo. Kristen Lillis, a costumer and fan from Kingman, Ariz., currently keeps R2-D2's head in her entryway and has other plans as well. "When I have hubby's sandtrooper done," Lillis says, "I definitely want to display it in our front entrance to freak people out!"

Work with what you have and with the features of the room. John Hudgens took advantage of the built-in features in his living room. "One of the more prominent displays is over my fireplace," Hudgens says. "In addition to my own custom-made Graflex lightsaber, Riddell Star Wars helmets and the Star Wars Fan Film Award, I've got some Babylon 5 memorabilia displayed there."

While shelves and tables can be used to add a more extensive Star Wars display to almost any room, Cyndi Haas suggests varying the displays. "I definitely think you should get out of the usual shelving thing and into something more interesting," she says. "Using a vintage hutch or something else you wouldn't normally see makes your collection even more interesting."

"At one house we featured, a gentleman had a three-tiered round table with parts of his collection on it. The table made the collection rise up and gave it a little extra something," says Haas.



CHANGING SEASONS

by Timothy Zahn

Illustrated by Andrew Robinson

They came out of nowhere as Obi-Wan Kenobi flew his Faraway-class scout ship high above the wide expanse of checkered fields: three battle droids on STAPs, firing their twin blasters at him for all they were worth.

From the droid socket behind Obi-Wan, the scout's R3 unit gave a startled electronic yelp. "I see them," Obi-Wan soothed him, throwing power to the aft shields and wishing fleetingly he had his usual Aethersprite starfighter instead of a sensor-loaded spotter ship. Still, two years of warfare had taught him how to deal with STAPs, and the scout ought to have enough power to pull this off. "Hang on," he warned the droid and pulled back hard on the control bar.

The noise of blaster impacts cut off abruptly as he stood the scout on its tail and shot upward, leaving the STAPs far behind. Maneuverable though they were, the little droid carriers didn't have nearly the climbing capability to match a maneuver like this. Obi-Wan continued starward for another few seconds, then shoved the control bar forward, flipping the scout into a full-power dive.

It was a stunt he'd first seen Anakin pull several months ago, and he'd taken the brash young Padawan to task about it afterward. The younger man had countered with the unassailable logic that, first, he'd survived and, second, the trick had worked. Since then he'd used it at least three more times, with the same record of success.

Anakin would be highly amused if he ever found out Obi-Wan had tried it himself. Fortunately, Anakin was a dozen light-years away. Stretching out to the Force, Obi-Wan added power to the dive and closed in for the kill.

The droids saw him coming, of course. One of them leaned his STAP backward, trying to bring his blasters to bear on the ship screaming down on him from directly above, while the other two shot off in opposite directions as they tried to get out from under the dive.

But no defensive programming in the galaxy could compensate for the STAP's basic design limitations. The first droid wobbled violently, nearly toppling backward as its center of mass moved too far away from its antigravity projector. The other two, running now with their blasters pointed the wrong direction, were in equally fatal postures. And neither programming nor design could take into account the accuracy of a Jedi gunner with the Force as his ally. Three bursts from the scout's laser cannon, and the droids and their STAPs had disintegrated into flaming rubble.

Pulling back on the control rod, Obi-Wan leveled out again, wincing a little as he watched the smoking debris rain onto the ground below. From the large neat patches of stubble he could see all over the plain, it was clear the farmers were starting to bring in their crops, and chunks of twisted metal and plastic were not something their massive



PART I: GUARDIAN OF THE PEOPLE

harvesting machines were designed to deal with. "At least we now know for sure that the Separatists have a base here," he commented to Arthree. Lifting his gaze from the ground below, he looked thoughtfully around the horizon.

It was about as unspectacular a landscape as he had ever seen. The farmland stretched as far north and south as he could see, squares of tan and brown and dark yellow dotted with widely scattered clusters of farm buildings. On the horizon to the west, a low ridge of gray mountains cut across the view, running north to south. Another, much closer set of cliffs rose along the east, paralleling the first range. A little ways to the southeast, the monotony of the second set of cliffs was broken by a gushing white-water river that emerged through a narrow gorge in the rock, washing violently into the valley and slowly calming as its banks widened and it turned toward the north. An intricate network of irrigation canals led away from the river, providing water for the entire valley. In the distance near the northern horizon, the towers and buildings of a modest city could be seen nestled up against the riverbank.

R3 gave a questioning warble. "No, I don't see anything, either," Obi-Wan said. "Let's see if we can get them to launch another attack." Taking a deep breath, he dropped the scout's nose downward, leveling out barely thirty meters above the ground and slowing to a crawl.

Alternating his attention between the horizon and his sensor displays, he stretched out to the Force.

He felt a warning flicker and twisted the control rod hard. But it was too late. With a thunderous concussion and a screech of metal, the scout's starboard wing exploded, sending shrapnel careening off the cockpit canopy and sending him into a twisting drop toward the ground.

He pulled hard on the control rod, his free hand darting across the board as he tried to key in the emergency backup systems. But he was too close to the ground, and there simply wasn't enough time. A forest of tan-colored stalks shot up in front of him, and with a violent jolt the scout slammed hard into the ground.



"What do you mean he went on ahead?" Anakin Skywalker demanded, glaring at Task Force Commander Fivvic as the tall Barabel stood beside the deck officer's desk. The deck officer, for his part, hunched diligently over his datapad and pretended he wasn't there. "Who told him he could do that?"

"Two points, Padawan Skywalker," the tall Barabel replied stiffly, and Anakin could sense the reflexive anger of his species stirring beneath the surface. Barabels were highly respectful of Jedi, pathologically so, in Anakin's opinion. But that respect didn't always translate to Jedi-in-training, particularly not when the Jedi-in-training was criticizing a full-fledged Jedi Knight. "One: As a command-rank officer, General Kenobi needs no one's permission to carry out his duties as he sees fit. Two: With you and your wing of the survey team delayed, he thought his time would be best utilized by beginning the scouting."

Unfortunately, both points made sense. "Fine," Anakin conceded. "How soon can we go after him?"

Fivvic half turned to look at the scout ships scattered around the hangar deck, Anakin's Jedi starfighter off to one side looking like a strange cousin at a family picnic. "You took a beating out there," the Barabel said. "Some repairs can wait. Others must be made before we can leave."

Anakin took a deep breath, trying hard to cultivate the patience Obi-Wan was always on his case about. "How soon?"

"Three days. Possibly four."

Anakin felt his throat tighten as he watched the maintenance team moving purposefully among the damaged scouts. Three days. An eternity, particularly in the middle of a war.

Still, Obi-Wan was a Jedi Knight, and there were only rumors that the Separatists had moved into Dagro in the first place. There was a fair chance that the rumors were wrong and that Obi-Wan was wasting his time looking .

So why was Anakin getting an uncomfortable tingle up his spine?

"I presume," Fivvic went on with only a trace of sarcasm, "that four days will be acceptable?"

Gently, Anakin stroked his mechanical right hand. "Make it three," he said, "and you've got a deal."



Slowly, Obi-Wan drifted back to consciousness, with a dark sense of disorientation and an even darker sense of urgency. Carefully, not moving, he eased his eyes open . . .

To find himself gazing into the faces of a young boy and an even younger girl.

"There," the girl said, rather smugly. "See? I told you he wasn't dead."

"Okay, fine," the boy grumped. "So he's not dead. Yet."

"Hopefully, not for a long time," Obi-Wan agreed, looking past the two children and trying to orient himself. He was half sitting, half lying in the middle of a patch of broken and flattened grain stalks, his back partially propped up against something hard and metallic. Off to his left he could see the crumpled nose of his scout and could smell the acrid scent of burning plastic. "Did you two get me out of my ship?" he asked the children.

"Dad did that," the boy said, still sounding a little miffed that he'd been wrong about Obi-Wan's condition. "He went to get the cart to get you out of here."

"A cart?" Carefully, Obi-Wan turned his head to look up over his shoulder, wincing at the twinges from his neck. He was leaning against the side of one of the harvesters he'd seen working the fields, one of the massive catches of the bin dumper sitting directly over his head. "Couldn't he have used this?"

"He could if he'd wanted to wreck all the sargeet between here and the house," the girl said with exaggerated patience. "Are you a soldier?"

"He's not a soldier, he's a Jedi," the boy put in before Obi-Wan could answer. "See? He's got a lightsaber."

Obi-Wan looked down to see the end of his lightsaber peeking out from inside his tunic. "Actually, I'm both," he told them, tucking the weapon back out of sight. Getting his hands beneath him, he started to push himself up.

And stifled a grunt of pain as agony shot through his right leg. "I don't think you ought to do that," the girl said. "Dad said you probably wouldn't be able to walk."

"Dad was right," Obi-Wan said, easing himself back onto the ground. "My name's Obi-Wan Kenobi. Who are you?"

"I'm Kit Swens," the boy identified. "This is my sister, Zizzy. This is our farm you crashed into."

"Sorry about that," Obi-Wan apologized, searching the sky within his field of view as he stretched out with the Force. There was no sign yet of a follow-up attack, but it could come at any time. "If we don't want to damage any more of it, we need to get me out of sight," he added, trying to look around the side of the harvester. "Arthree?"

There was no answer. "Dad said your droid looked dead," Kit offered.

Dead, or else gone dormant. Republic scout droids were designed to do that, if capture seemed inevitable, to try to keep the Separatists from pulling anything useful out of their data banks. "How does the rest of the ship look?" he asked.

"Pretty much the same," Kit craned his neck. "Here he comes."

Obi-Wan frowned, listening. No hum of repulsorlifts, but he thought he could hear rhythmic footsteps over the wind-rustle of the grain stalks. A moment later, a pair of slender lop-horned zeles appeared around the side of the harvester, harnessed together and pulling a wheeled wooden cart. A large bearded man sat on a bench seat at the front of the cart with a rein stick in his hand. He gave Obi-Wan an evaluating look as he brought the cart to a halt. "Awake, I see," he said. "How bad is it?"

"Nothing serious, but I will need transport," Obi-Wan told him. "And a place to hide."

"I can supply the first," the man said, setting the rein stick onto the seat beside him and jumping down to the ground. "I'm not so sure about the second."

"One's not going to do much good without the other," Obi-Wan pointed out as the man took his arm and pulled him upright. "The Separatist forces could be back at any minute to finish the job."

"Your best bet's going to be Vale City," the man said as he walked them to the cart, taking most of Obi-Wan's weight onto himself. "I can try to get you there."

"Is that the city way to the north?" Obi-Wan asked. "If so, we'll never make it that far."

"You rather hide in the fields?" the man countered. "That's about all there is between here and Vale."

"How about one of your outbuildings?" Obi-Wan suggested, nodding at the zeles. "In with your animals, maybe, where they'll help mask my lifeform readings."

"Forget it," the man grunted as he heaved Obi-Wan up over the side and into the back of the cart. "I'm not risking my family and farm for you. I'm sure not going to help you drag your war here to Dagro, Kit, Zizzy – into the cart."

"Listen to me," Obi-Wan said quietly, propping himself up on one arm. "I was attacked by Trade Federation battle droids. Battle droids don't travel in small groups. That means the Separatists are here. If they're here, so is the war."

"Not if we don't let you fight them," the man said, giving his daughter a boost up onto the bench seat beside her brother and then climbing up himself. "And spare me the line about how the Republic wants to protect us from the forces of evil. Coruscant never paid a crippled droid's worth of attention to us before all this blew up." He picked up the rein stick and twitched it, and with a jerk the cart started forward. "We'll drop the kids at the house and head for Vale."

Obi-Wan looked at the sky. It was only noon, but even at the speed zeles could make, getting to the city would take the rest of the day and then some. "I don't suppose you have anything a little faster."

"Look around you," the other growled. "Seventy percent of our crop is sargheet. In case you hadn't noticed – and you probably hadn't – the bottom fell out of the sargheet market half a year ago." He gestured toward the zeles. "Stripe and Trotter eat crop stubble and excrete fertilizer. Landspeeders eat money and excrete debt."

"I understand," Obi-Wan said, grimacing. It was all too easy sometimes for a Jedi to forget what the life of the ordinary Republic citizen was like. "My apologies. My name's Obi-Wan Kenobi, by the way."

"Kirlan Swens," the man said reluctantly. "Jedi, right?"

"Yes."

"Figures."

Ten minutes later they reached the Swens homestead, an old but well-kept two-story house beside a large barn and surrounded by a half dozen smaller storage sheds. Kirlan had pulled the cart up to the barn and the children were getting out when Obi-Wan finally heard the sound he'd been expecting ever since that sudden explosion had crippled his scout ship. "STAPs," he said, glancing up at the sky. There was nothing in sight, which meant they were coming from the west, the direction currently blocked by the barn. "A lot of them."

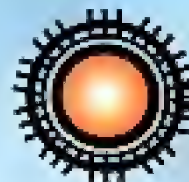
"Bloss it," Kirlan snarled under his breath, his eyes darting around the sky. "You kids – get in the house. Tell your mother to play dumb. Come on, Jedi, move it."

With the harvester still out in the field, most of the barn's huge expanse was empty. "Over here," Kirlan grunted as he half-carried Obi-Wan toward a large, escape-pod-sized object in the corner. A harvester's cab/engine module, Obi-Wan tentatively identified it. "I keep it for parts," Kirlan went on. "There should be enough room for

you in the engine compartment. Can you get that ventilated access panel open?"

"Yes," Obi-Wan said, stretching out to the Force and pulling open the panel. The empty space behind it looked a little tight, but with a little squeezing it should do. Reaching up to the lip, he pulled himself up and inside, trying to keep his leg from banging against the side as he did so. Wriggling his way into a more or less comfortable position, he reached out with the Force and pulled the panel closed. "How does it look?" he called.

"Should work if you keep your mouth closed," Kirlan called back. "I'll bring the zeles in and tether them beside you. Don't budge until I come get you."



It took the Separatist forces over an hour to make their way from the crash site to the Swens homestead. From the noises coming faintly through the ventilation grille, it sounded like the searchers started with the house, then moved to the smaller buildings, and finally came to the barn. There was the usual amount of clanging around, the usual mechanical orders and responses, and a single bad moment when one of the battle droids pulled himself up and actually pressed a photoreceptor against the grille.

Fortunately, Obi-Wan had had the foresight to spend most of his first hour stealthily unfastening a large radiator coil and propping it up in front of the grille. The droid saw what appeared to be a compartment full of machinery and hopped back down again.

A few minutes later, the whole squad trooped out of the barn. A few minutes after that, he heard the sounds of the STAPs lifting into the sky to continue the search.

And then, as he'd suspected it would, the real wait began.

It was after dark before Kirlan finally returned to the barn. "Jedi?" he called softly from below the access panel.

"Still here," Obi-Wan assured him, moving the camouflaging radiator coil out of the way. "Things quiet out there?"

"Quiet enough," the other grunted. There was a creak of metal, and Obi-Wan felt a rush of cool air as the panel was pulled open. "Come on – we need to talk."

They crossed the empty floor of the barn and emerged into the night air. Obi-Wan had taken the time since the droids' departure to do a series of short healing trances, and although his leg wasn't completely healed it was good enough for him to walk without Kirlan's assistance. He could sense the farmer's surprise at that, but he made no comment.

It was as he led the way across the yard that Obi-Wan first sensed the other presences ahead of him in the house. "You have company?" he asked mildly.

Kirlan gave him a sideways look as he climbed the steps to the back porch. "I invited a few neighbors," he said. Pulling open the door, he gestured down a hallway stretching in front of them. "After you."

Stilling a grimace, Obi-Wan walked down the hallway. At the end, a large but homey conversation room opened off to the left.

And in the conversation room were Kiran's guests. An entire packed room full of them.

"Hello," he said, stopping in the entryway and nodding to the group. There were men and women both, he saw, all with the hardened, sun-burned skin that seemed to be the common look of farmers all across the galaxy. For their part, the people looked him over in silence, their emotions roiling with suspicion and fear. "I'm General Obi-Wan Kenobi of the army of the Republic."

A low murmur ran through the crowd, the mood darkening even further. "A general yet," someone muttered, and Obi-Wan silently berated himself for his thoughtlessness. The title, which had sounded so foreign to his ears when it had first been bestowed upon him, now rolled a little too easily off his tongue.

"I was right," one of the men growled, glaring accusingly at Obi-Wan. "The war's here. And he's the one who brought it."

"Easy, Hanco," Kiran cautioned.

"Easy, my foot," Hanco shot back, his eyes still on Obi-Wan. "Well, Jedi? You have an answer for that?"

"It depends on what you mean by 'the war,'" Obi-Wan said evenly. "If you mean the struggle for the Republic's survival, then the war is everywhere." He looked around the room. "If what you mean is battles and death and destruction, Dagro might still be able to avoid that."

"Why are you here?" a woman asked.

"We heard rumors that the Separatists had set up a presence on your world," Obi-Wan told her. "I came to see if the reports were true. Apparently, they were."

"Maybe; maybe not," Hanco countered. "We never saw anything like those battle droids until you showed up. Maybe they followed you in, hey?"

"Possible, but unlikely," Obi-Wan said. "And, actually, the fact that you haven't seen them before now is a good sign. That might mean they're still in the process of moving in and can hopefully be chased away with a minimum of trouble."

"Is that what you're going to do?" a youthful voice spoke up.

Obi-Wan blinked as he focused for the first time on the far right of the room. Kit and Zizzy were sitting cross-legged on the floor in front of a seated woman, presumably their mother, both children gazing up at him with wide eyes. "Excuse me?"

"I said, Are you going to chase them away?" Zizzy repeated.

Obi-Wan glanced up at their mother's stony expression, then looked down at the children again. "Even a Jedi wouldn't be so bold as to tackle an enemy base by himself," he told them solemnly. "No, at this point all I'm planning is to wait for the rest of my survey team to come get me."

There was a subtle but definite lowering of the tension in the room. Clearly, there had been some fear that he was here to draft them all into Republic military service. "So what do you want from us?" one of the men asked.

"Only that you don't betray me to the Separatists," Obi-Wan looked at Kiran. "And perhaps that Kiran will allow me to help around the farm."

Kiran's eyes narrowed. "What kind of help?"

"Whatever needs doing," Obi-Wan said. "You told me that Conuscant never paid a crippled droid's worth of attention to you. Maybe I can make up a little for that neglect."

"You could start by raising the price of sargheet," someone suggested.

A small but genuine ripple of laughter twittered around the room. "I was thinking more along the lines of helping get the crops in," Obi-Wan said with a smile. They weren't opposed to the Republic, he realized now, or even to Obi-Wan himself. They were simply hardworking people who didn't want their lives made any harder than they already were.

"Actually, what I need most right now is someone to strip my crop stubble," Kiran said. "I'll show you how in the morning. Everyone else, thanks for coming. And if something made of metal and carrying a blaster comes around asking questions, play dumb."

With a rustle of chairs and a low buzz of conversation, the crowd got to its feet and began to drift out, a few people lingering behind to talk to Kiran or his wife. Obi-Wan stayed at the door, exchanging silent nods with the farmers as they filed past, until finally only he and the Swens family were left. "You must be Kiran's wife," Obi-Wan said, stepping back into the room and nodding to the woman still seated with the children.

"I'm Trissa Swens," she confirmed, nodding back at him, her face marginally less stony but still unsmiling. "I wish I could say it was an honor to have you here, General Kenobi."

"But with Separatist forces hunting me, all you can see is the threat I pose to your family?" Obi-Wan suggested.

Kiran took a step toward him. "Stay out of my wife's mind, Jedi," he warned.

"I wasn't in it," Obi-Wan said tiredly, a ripple of frustration and sadness pouring through him. "It's just that I've been fighting this war long enough to know how people react to me."

Trissa's lip twitched, and Obi-Wan caught her flicker of guilt. "I'm sorry," she said, "I didn't mean it to sound that way."

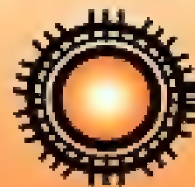
"No apology needed," Obi-Wan said, rubbing his temples. "Unless you've got other questions, though, I'd like to go back to the barn and get some sleep."

Trissa looked at her husband. "There's no need to go to the barn," Kiran said, a bit gruffly. "We have plenty of room here in the house."

"Thank you," Obi-Wan said. "But tonight, at least, I'd rather stay outside. The droids might come back; and if there's going to be a fight I don't want it to be here in the house."

Kiran's lips puckered. "I appreciate that," he said, a little grudgingly. "I'll bring you some blankets and a field mattress. Some food, too – I guess you missed dinner." He looked Obi-Wan up and down. "And I'd better get you some clothes," he added. "That outfit might blend in okay in town, but there's no way anyone out here would wear anything that flimsy."

"Thank you," Obi-Wan said again, taking a step down the hallway. "Good night, everyone. I'll see you in the morning."



If the battle droids did indeed pass through the area again that night, they were considerate enough to be quiet about it. Obi-Wan slept soundly, not waking up until Kit arrived a little after sunrise to bring him in to breakfast.

The meal was quick but pleasant, with little of the underlying tension he'd sensed the evening before. Apparently, a good night's sleep – perhaps, more importantly, an uneventful night's sleep – had helped calm some of their fears.

After breakfast, Kirian took Obi-Wan back to the barn to a huge stack of ten-centimeter-long grain stalks piled beside a bin made of wire mesh. "Crop stubble," he identified it. "The lower sections of the sargheest stalks. By the time we've finished the harvest, we'll hopefully have enough of this to feed the zeles for the rest of the year."

He picked up one of the stalks and pointed at a dozen fine blue bristles attached to the base and sticking up about half the stalk's length. "But only if we pull these bristles off first," he went on. "If the animals eat them, they accumulate in their digestive systems and you end up with a dead animal."

Obi-Wan picked up a stalk and experimentally tugged at one of the bristles. It came off in his fingers with far less effort than he'd expected. "Yeah, they come off real easy," Kirian agreed. "Which is why they'll come off in a zele's gut, too. Anyway, that pail right there is for the bristles – Trissa makes a nice soup stock out of them. The clean stubble goes into that wire bin. Got it?"

"Got it," Obi-Wan said, suppressing the reflexive urge to suggest that a droid might do the job more efficiently. Obviously it could. Just as obviously, Kirian couldn't afford to buy one.

"Great," Kirian said, moving toward the door. "The kids and I will be out in the fields all day, but Trissa will bring you some lunch when it's time."

"Will you be taking your lunch out with you?"

Kirian hesitated. "I'll have something for the kids," he said. "Trissa and I usually don't bother with more than two meals a day."

Clearly another cost-cutting move. "Sounds very Jedi," Obi-Wan told him, keeping his voice casual. "Please tell her not to bother with any lunch for me either."

For a moment Kirian's eyes seemed to search Obi-Wan's face. "In that case, I'll send the kids to bring you in when it's dinnertime," he said. "Have fun."

Rather to Obi-Wan's surprise, he did. It seemed sometimes like his whole life since the Battle of Geonosis had been nothing but combat, life-or-death decisions, and long days of hyperspace travel. To do work that was useful yet took little mental effort was a welcome change of pace, soothing and satisfying. By the time Kit and Zizzy came to get him, he had the bucket half full of blue bristles and the kind of inner contentment and peace he usually got only from a period of Jedi meditation.

"How'd it go?" Kirian asked as the children led their guest toward a large wooden table on one side of the kitchen.

"Very well," Obi-Wan told him, "I finished about a quarter of the pile."

Kirian looked at the children with lifted eyebrows. "He did," Kit confirmed.

"I'm impressed," Kirian said. "Actually, I'm ..." He hesitated, then gave a microscopic shrug. "To be honest, I'm surprised you were

willing to take the job. It's usually the sort of work the children end up with."

"I was doing it before you got here," Zizzy said, crinkling her nose. "It gets pretty boring."

"Boring or not, there's nothing wrong with honest work," Obi-Wan told her.

"You wouldn't know it from some of the officials who've occasionally visited the valley," Trissa said scornfully from beside the stove. "Particularly the women. They seem horrified that people actually live this way."

"I know a few officials like that myself," Obi-Wan agreed with a smile. "How'd the field work go?"

"We're getting there," Kirian said, gesturing him toward one of the chairs at the table. "I've been trying to figure a way to sneak you out of here and up to the city. But those blasted battle droids have been zip-ping around overhead all day."

"Really," Obi-Wan said as he sat down. He hadn't heard any STAPs from the barn. "How high were they?"

"Pretty high," Kirian said, sitting down at the head of the table. "You had to look close to tell they weren't birds."

"Did they ever come lower?"

"Not that I saw," Kirian said. "You think they're worried about an attack from the ground?"

"Doesn't seem likely," Obi-Wan said, frowning. "All my long-range weapons are still with my scout ship. They've surely scooped up the wreckage and taken it away by now."

"Unless they think you're not the only one here," Kit suggested as he maneuvered a bowl of vegetables onto the table. "Maybe they think you're trying to sucker them into a trap."

"We can hope so," Obi-Wan told him. "There's nothing I'd like better right now than for them to keep their distance."

"When will your survey team arrive?" Trissa asked as she set a platter containing a small roasted avian in front of her husband.

Obi-Wan shook his head. "I don't know. My Padawan was held up bringing his part of the group, which is why I went on ahead."

"That wasn't very smart," Zizzy said primly as she set a glass of water beside Obi-Wan's plate. "Even I know better than to go to a strange place alone."

"I can't argue with you there," Obi-Wan said ruefully, taking a welcome sip of the water. "He was due in at the rendezvous yesterday, but from his report I know some of the ships had been damaged. Trouble is, I don't know how badly. It'll probably be several more days before they get here."

Kirian hissed between his teeth. "That's a long time to keep someone hidden in a barn."

"At least, in the same barn," Obi-Wan agreed. "But if enough of your neighbors are willing to help, maybe I can barn-hop my way to Vale City."

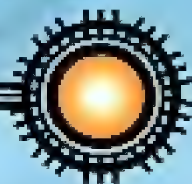
"You mean like traveling to one homestead at a time?" Kit asked.

"Exactly," Obi-Wan said. "I'd go at night, maybe slung underneath one of your zeles to help disguise my infrared signature."

"Sounds risky," Kirian rumbled. He picked up a knife and fork and started to carve the meat off the avian. "Not just for you, either."

"It couldn't hurt to ask them," Trissa said firmly, sitting down beside her husband.

"I suppose not," Kirian said. "Probably not a good idea to use the comlinks, but I'll be seeing Pickers and Jurvi out in their fields tomorrow. I'll talk to them then."



Kirian and the children returned the next evening with the news that Pickers and Jurvi were indeed willing, if not exactly enthusiastic. Trissa had made a thick and tangy stew for dinner, and as the Swenses ate they discussed plans for Obi-Wan's departure.

But for that night, at least, all their plans came to nothing. The battle droids resumed their patrols as the stars appeared overhead, dropping lower in the sky as if anticipating an escape attempt on the part of their quarry. Sitting in the barn listening to the sounds of the STAPs, Obi-Wan finally gave up and settled down to get some sleep.

He was up before sunrise the next morning and had already put in half an hour of work before Zizzy called him to breakfast. A quick meal and he was back at work, determined to trim the pile of crop stubble down to half its size before dinner. By the time the others returned he had very nearly achieved his goal, with a warm glow of victory that lasted only as long as it took Kit to back the zeles and cart up to the stack and unload the additional stubble they'd collected during the day.

They all ate dinner together, and Obi-Wan returned to the barn to prepare to leave. Once again, by midnight it was clear that the droids' vigilance would make that impossible, and he reluctantly returned to his field mattress to sleep.

It was on the fourth morning, just as he finished getting dressed, that the droids finally came.



With his ear pressed against a cracked panel in the barn wall, he listened intently to the telltale sound of five more STAPs coming to rest out in the yard. If he'd counted correctly, that made twelve on the ground, with twelve or thirteen more running high patrol overhead.

Twenty-five to one. Terrible odds, made even worse by the presence of civilians on the scene.

Especially when they were civilians he'd grown to consider friends.

He stepped away from the wall and took a deep breath. "A Jedi knows only calm," he murmured to himself. Tucking his lightsaber inside the farmer's shirt Trissa had given him, he started toward the door.

He was nearly there when the panel was flung open and a battle droid strode inside. "You – halt," he snapped, swiveling his blaster to point at Obi-Wan's chest.

"Hey, I didn't hurt anything," Obi-Wan said, holding up his hands in feigned surprise. "Really, I didn't."

The droid's head swiveled as he looked around the rest of the barn, then came back to gaze at Obi-Wan. "Come," he ordered.

The rest of the family was gathered together in a tight knot in the middle of the yard when Obi-Wan and his escort arrived, Kirian with his arm tightly around Trissa's shoulders as she in turn pressed the two children close to her sides. Behind them, the house loomed dark and ominous against the pinks and reds of the sunrise coloring the sky behind it. Arrayed in a semicircle around them, a group of battle droids kept wary watch. "Ah," said a droid with officer markings as Obi-Wan was marched toward the group. "The other, as expected. You – identify."

"Hey, I didn't take anything," Obi-Wan protested. "I just slept there, okay? That's all I did."

"Identify," the officer repeated, more sharply this time.

"I'm Marsh Foxter," Obi-Wan said. "I just – look, I didn't take anything, okay? I just slept there."

To Obi-Wan's mild surprise, Kirian caught the cue. "He's nothing but a rotten tramp," the farmer growled. "I must have kicked him off my land a dozen times."

"We shall see," the officer repeated.

Carefully, Obi-Wan stretched out with the Force, reaching to the droid's optical sensors and giving them a gentle vibration. His face was certainly in the enemy-agents listing that was undoubtedly now being transmitted to the officer, but fluttering the droid's vision should blur his image just enough to make a positive identification impossible.

Apparently, it worked. "No matter," the droid said with an electronic snort. "You are a liar. You have been working in the barn for two days. Otherwise, both children would not have been free to work the fields with their father."

Obi-Wan felt his throat tighten. So that was what the high-flying droids had been looking for: an anomaly in the farmers' normal routines. He should have thought of that.

"So you are a spy," the officer concluded. "Bring them all."

Obi-Wan looked at the Swenses, standing silently gazing back at him. People who had fed and clothed him, who had risked their lives to help him. He could sense their fear, both for themselves and for him.

And then he focused on the children's faces and saw the trust and calm adding a sheen of hope to the fear in their eyes. He was a Jedi, one of those who claimed to be guardians of the people; and for all the cynicism of their elders, they still believed in him. Still believed that he could and would save them.

There was a flicker in the Force ... and suddenly he knew what he had to do.

"No," he said, taking a step forward as the droids started to close in on the family. "Leave them alone."

"Or?" the officer countered.

Smiling tightly, Obi-Wan lifted a hand, stretched out to the Force, and threw the droid backward to slam hard against the ground.

The yard exploded in instant consternation. Swiveling in unison, the entire group of droids turned its blasters away from the family and toward this sudden new threat.

But they were too late. Obi-Wan snatched out his lightsaber and with a snap-hiss ignited it, the glowing blue blade throwing shadows against the darkened house. He took a step toward the Swenses, then pretended to think better of it and began backing up again.

The droids reacted exactly as he'd hoped. Their circle shifted in response, tightening in toward him and bypassing the other four humans. Obi-Wan caught Kiran's eye and gave a fractional nod; the other nodded back and began backing slowly toward the relative safety of the house, pulling his wife and children with him.

Overhead, the STAPs were closing in as well, tightening their part of the deadly ring around him. Obi-Wan kept backing up, shifting his lightsaber back and forth. If he could keep their full attention on him for just a few more seconds. ...

Abruptly, he heard the STAPs behind him twitch their drives to full power. A droid voice shouted a raspy warning –

And, like an avenging angel, a Jedi starfighter shot over the house out of the rising sun, its laser cannon spitting destruction as it tore through the middle of the STAP formation.

Obi-Wan was already in motion. He leaped to one edge of the droid circle, slashing with his lightsaber, then spinning around to deflect the blaster shots belatedly coming his direction from the more distant droids. Out of the corner of his eye he saw the Swens family running full speed toward the house, safely out of the battle area. Overhead, the rest of the survey team shot past in the starfighter's wake, its laser cannon systematically dealing with the STAPs Anakin had missed.

Smiling grimly, Obi-Wan stretched out to the Force, settling his mind and body into Jedi combat mode.

Three minutes later, it was over.



"I've heard all the stories," Kiran said, shaking his head in amazement as he fingered the steaming mug of misti in front of him. "But I'd never actually seen a Jedi in action."

"It was cool," Kit said with barely contained excitement. "Can you teach me how to do that?"

"Kit," Trissa said reprovingly as she set mugs in front of Obi-Wan and Anakin.

"Actually, I can't," Obi-Wan told him. "Not unless you were born with the ability."

His comlink beeped, and he pulled it out. "Yes?"

"All clear," Commander Fivvic's voice came. "We got most of the backups, except for a few who managed to escape into that big gorge to the east."

"So that's it?" Trissa asked.

"It is for now," Anakin told her. "We'll alert Coruscant that there's definitely a Separatist presence here, and when they can free up a task force they'll send it here to clear them out." He looked at Kit and Zizzy.

"That is, if they don't give up and run away before that."

"But you'll be leaving?" Zizzy asked.

"No," Obi-Wan said. "Not just yet."

Anakin looked at him, and he could sense the Padawan's surprise. "Why not?"

"Because there's something wrong here," Obi-Wan said, trying to put his thoughts and impressions into words. "That droid commander said that they'd seen Kit and Zizzy in the fields when at least one of them should have been working on the crop stubble. But that kind of reasoning is way beyond combat droids. That means there must be some Neimoidians or other living beings here as well."

"Doesn't sound right for a small garrison," Anakin said, his voice suddenly thoughtful.

"It isn't," Obi-Wan agreed. "But it's exactly right for a research or development facility ... and my scout was taken out by an attack I didn't see coming."

"A new weapon," Anakin murmured, gazing out into space. "Looks like it," Obi-Wan agreed. "And Fivvic said that the surviving droids just now fled into the gorge. How would they know there was enough room for them to fly in there unless they'd already checked it out?"

"That could be where their base is," Kiran suggested. "Those cliffs go back ten kilometers. Plenty of room in there for any kind of facility they want."

"I agree," Obi-Wan said. "But when they first came searching for me, they didn't come from that direction. They came from the west. I remember that because the barn was blocking their view."

"That's right, they did," Kiran murmured thoughtfully. "Huh."

"So what does that mean?" Kit asked.

"It means they took the time to circle way around so that no one would guess where their base was," Obi-Wan told him.

"But they just showed us where it is," Zizzy objected.

"Exactly," Obi-Wan said. "Which implies that whoever's in charge decided it didn't matter anymore if we knew. Which implies in turn that whatever they're doing in there is about finished."

He looked at Anakin. "Which implies that we'd better take a look while we still can."

"I don't know," Anakin said doubtfully. "The survey team's on a pretty tight schedule, and there aren't any attack teams anywhere in the sector."

"So we'll let the survey team go," Obi-Wan told him. "They can leave us your starfighter and one of the scout ships, and we'll rejoin them when we're done."

"Wait a second," Trissa put in, starting to sound alarmed. "You're the one who told us a Jedi couldn't take on a whole enemy base."

"I said a Jedi couldn't take on a base alone," Obi-Wan corrected, smiling tightly. "Now, there are two of us."

Kiran shook his head. "Why," he said, "do I suddenly have a bad feeling about this?" 🙄

To Be Concluded ...



REPUBLIC HOLONET NEWS

SENATORS FARR AND COOR CENSURED SBI REPORT BLAMES SENATORS FOR DURO MISMANAGEMENT

CRIMINAL CHARGES EXPECTED SOON

SENATE ROTUNDA, CORUSCANT—Amid cries of criticism and shouts of "traitor!" Senator Ronet Coor (Iseño) tendered his resignation following reports of criminal mismanagement that resulted in the capture of Duro by Separatist forces.

Early this morning, the Senate Bureau of Intelligence released its 25-datapage report, authored by Agent Inglemenn Barrezz. "We were able to get past the grivelling of those involved and cut through the bureaucracy. We discovered the unfortunate truth that insular politicking led to the fall of Duro," he told reporters at a press conference.

The report analyzed why Duro was so poorly defended against the Separatist attack, finding that the system's orbital defensive platforms had been supplemented only by meager capital-ship support, most of it in the form of carriers and transports of limited effectiveness.

The system had been allocated three of the newly commissioned Venator-class Star Destroyers, all of which were absent during the attack. Fraudulent requisition datamemos placed the three vessels as undergoing "shakedown refurbishment" at a classified location, but the SBI report revealed that they had been instead redistributed to the Rodia-Ando battlefield in the Mid Rim.

The report names Senator Onaconda Farr (Rodia) — then chair of the Senate Action Subcommittee for Corellian Trade Spine Defense — responsible for the asset relocation. Aid to Duro during the attack should have come from Iseño, but those warships (whose complement remains classified) were also redistributed to Rodia.

"What was initially categorized as a bureaucratic misfiling has proven to be a direct and intentional act of unauthorized reallocation," states the report. "An analysis of financial transactions and communiqués prove Iseño's willing collusion in the act, in exchange for millions of credits and promised rebuilding contracts on Ando."

"How could this have happened?" asked Jorrigar SoBilles, a prominent Duros businessbeing. "This proves that the Senate cannot be trusted to wage this war. For the sake of other worlds that fall in the crosshairs of General Grievous, I hope that a more authoritative body helms the defense."

SBI officials denied allegations that all prominent Rodian politicians were being investigated for similar deceptions, though they did confirm



that Executive Administrator Dar Wac had been questioned and cleared of any suspicions. "Please, do not turn this into an issue of race," said Barrezz. "We are simply trying to find the avenues through which such deceptions could be carried."

Though the office of the Supreme Chancellor refrained from comment, Rotunda insiders expect a full review of the structures and policies of Senate Action Subcommittees, with their dissolution possible in the near future.

Senators Lesi Dio (Uyter) and Padmé Amidala (Naboo), vocal proponents of sector rights of autonomy, have expressed concern over any such changes. "This poor example should not dictate sweeping policy changes," said Senator Dio. "Do not let the actions of two corrupt Senators paint the entire body as corrupt."

"While we join our colleagues in shock and disapproval of these Senators' acts, we do not want to hear the Senate's voice silenced in these trying times," said Senator Amidala. "Already there are cries for the Chancellor to directly steer the war; today, I heard esteemed Duros leaders demand that a human be placed in charge of battlefronts that overlap rival homeworlds; I cannot believe that these short-sighted reactionary cries could become policy."

CIS SHADOWFEED

S H E E D I N G L I G H T O N T H E I R L I E S

Corellian Trade Spine Secured

MID-RIM NODE – With the splitting of a victorious task force of capital warships for patrol duties along the entire Corellian Trade Spine, General Grievous officially declared Operation Durge's Lance a success.

"We have taken the battle to the Republic's heart and have shown those cowards how far we are willing to go to protect what is ours," the General said in a brief statement distributed to CIS Shadowfeed nodes galaxywide.

"With Duro firmly under Confederacy control, our forces now control the flow of traffic up and down the Trade Spine and can prevent Republic attempts to steal back our worlds," the General continued.

Squadrons of Givin combat engineers have towed asteroid bodies into strategic placements and trajectories along the Spine to hinder hyperspace travel. Safe passage can only be obtained through astrogation calculations in 12th-degree hyperometry and Helrossi-principal octatic equations – methodologies devised by advanced Givin theorists.

Geonosis dreadnaughts and Givin Wavecrest-class frigates are currently patrolling



the Spine. HoloNet nodes along the spine have been dismantled, with the bulk of intra-sector communications being handled instead by Banking Clan communication ships.

Though the General made no comment on future campaigns, analysts foresee Yag'Dhul as a likely launching point for major offensives along the Rimma Trade Route, to supplement forces in the Seswenna and Sluisai sectors. Aleen and Atzerri, worlds that have so far remained neutral, are also likely candidates for liberation missions, while the Republic world of Malastare seems likely to become a major battlefield.

The latest infopacket dispatched by the ever-mobile Separatist Union to CIS Shadowfeed contains an unattributed message directed to Republic media channels.

"We have scanned the propaganda from the Republic, which paints us as predators waiting to snatch up neutral worlds like Corellia," it says. "The right to secede and determine our own fates dictates our missions. These are not raids of cold conquest. Palpatine knows the terms. Let the Confederacy be, and this war will end."

Organic Forces Arrive

AVISIQ, MODRJA – Moorja, a small Mid-Rim world down the Corellian Trade Spine from Yag'Dhul, will be protected by organic infantry from any Republic reprisals, Commerce Guild President Shu Mai said today.

Protecting the vulnerable "back door" to the recent conquest of the Spine was a key item in her speech to Commerce Guild shareholders today, and holographic imagery from the plains of Moorja showed ranks of the so-called "flesh and blood corps" landing on the planet.

"The ion storms of Moorja have prevented the deployment of our standard battle-droid forces, but Neimoidian Gunnery Battalions, Gossam Commandos and Koortivar Fusiliers have consolidated to provide Moorja with cost-effective protective forces," said Mai.

"If you peruse the attached profit-and-loss schema in your folders, you'll see that in this case, the distribution of organic personnel in this combat market has proven to be more affordable than refitting existing capital goods with ionic-damping technologies," Mai continued. "The availability of agrarian yields to feed our forces clearly shows that this approach makes the most business sense."



Hoth Battlefront:

Fighting Mother Nature and Imaginary Foes by Chris Trevas

» In March 1979, Finse, Norway, experienced its worst weather in recorded history. It's almost become a tradition for the first location shoot of a *Star Wars* film to be marred by bizarre weather phenomena, although in those freezing temperatures the cast and crew probably would have preferred a Tunisian sandstorm.

At 4,000 feet above sea level, Finse is the highest point on the railway from the country's capital of Oslo to the port city of Bergen. Some 70 members of the cast and crew moved into a ski lodge, making it the base of operations and taking over its 35 rooms. A massive plateau glacier four miles away and 6,000 feet high was the intended destination for the cameras.

Blizzards saw to it that the first unit never reached the glacier's summit, but the crew filmed what it could with the principal cast in an area closer to the lodge. Ultimately, the crew had to get into the studio to keep the production on schedule.

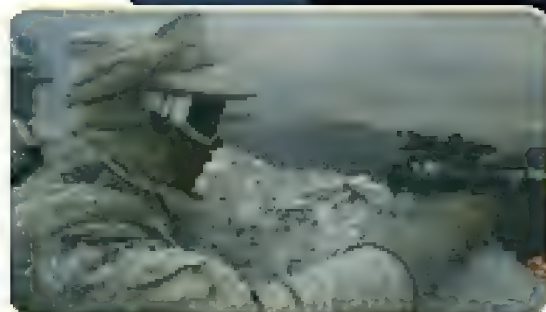
The second unit's primary goal was to capture scenes of Rebel soldiers in battle. Gun turrets and weaponry, which had been constructed in London, were set up along trenches on the glacier. Thirty-five Norwegian Red Cross rescue skiers were enlisted as front-line Rebels. They were a resourceful bunch, once erecting an igloo for shelter during particularly bad conditions. In another instance, a group of the rescue skiers utilized their survival training to dig a hole six feet under the snow to wait out a dangerous whiteout.

Each morning at 6 a.m. the crew set out on tracked vehicles, pulling trailers of

equipment as close to the glacier as possible before being hindered by the weather. Overall, there were only five days of really good shooting conditions for the second unit, three of which were spent on the glacier itself. On those rare days, the cast and crew would spend up to 11 hours there, with 40-mile-an-hour winds and temperatures dropping from 10 to 30 degrees below zero.

The bitter temperatures were a big problem for equipment too. To simulate laser hits from approaching Imperial forces, explosive charges were set along the front lines. The usual plastic cables used for wiring such effects became brittle in the glacial conditions, causing them to snap. Special-effects technicians had to devise new types of cable to fire their explosives. For all the activity, the battle was oddly one-sided while on location. There was not a single Imperial in sight.

The second unit wrapped in Finse on April 3, celebrating with a party at the ski lodge for everyone involved. That same day, a huge avalanche occurred, a sign to the local population that spring was arriving. ☺



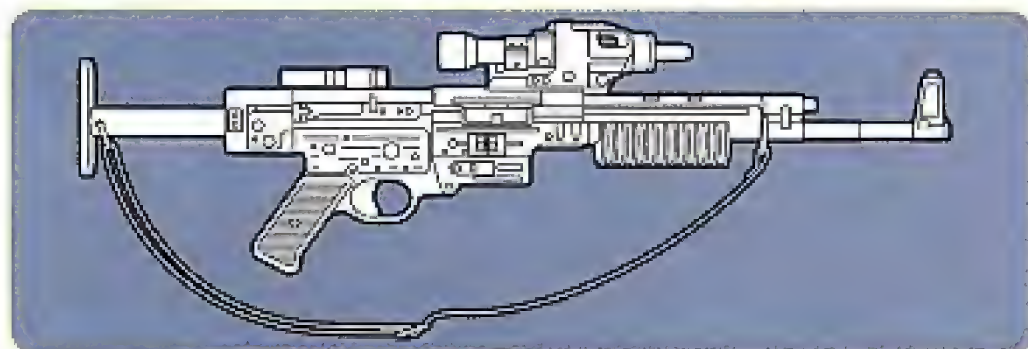
BlasTech DH-17

The DH-17 blasters are modified castings of British Sterling L2A3 submachine guns. A ridged silver barrel replaced the front half of the gun, while the rest was dressed with plastic model-kit parts and a short gun sight on top.



BlasTech A280 Blaster Rifle

Most of the Rebel ground troops were armed with these blaster rifles. The props were based on MP44 assault rifles used by German forces during the latter stages of World War II. Modifications include a new fish-shaped stock, top scope assembly, and a shotgunlike foregrip.





The design of the Rebel gun turrets evolved from an early sketch of tanks in the snow. During the design process they were switched to stationary towers. Ralph McQuarrie developed the design ultimately used in the film.



The use of tripod-based guns in trench warfare is a rarity in World War I, when British and German troops used the 1908 Vickers Maxim Class C machine gun. These Rebel blasters are similar in size and design.



On the plateau, the snow is known to reach a depth of up to 100 feet in the winter.

As they were only pretending to be field troops, the actors didn't have to eat field rations. Two intrepid women on skis delivered lunch in large thermoses to the glacier each day.



Many Hoth troops carried pistols holstered at their side. These props were derived from the pistol Ponda Baba brandished at the Mos Eisley Cantina. It was made from a cut-down Charter Arms AR-7 survival rifle with a tail fin from a British mortar shell added as a muzzle. A grip from a submachine gun was substituted for the original handle, and parts from a plastic V-8 engine model detail the sides of the prop.

Assistant director EMI Winstley instructed the "troops" in the proper use of laser guns. He demonstrated how to jerk back the nonfunctional props to make them appear to be recoiling from firing a blast. Special-effects animators added the blaster huffs in postproduction.

A Book Hunter's Bounty

by Jason Fry

Elizabeth Hand Takes on Young Boba Fett's Adventures

Audiences saw Boba Fett take his first steps down a dark road toward becoming the galaxy's most-feared bounty hunter two years ago in *Star Wars* Episode III: *Attack of the Clones*, when his father, Jango, died in the Geonosis execution arena and left young Boba an orphan amid the unfolding chaos of the Clone Wars. Now, author Elizabeth Hand is taking that story forward, telling the young Fett's adventures in Scholastic's *Boba Fett* series for young-adult readers.

The first two *Boba Fett* books, *The Fight to Survive* and *Crossfire*, were penned by veteran science-fiction author Terry Bisson, who told the story of Boba's pre-Episode II youth, pitting him against the likes of Count Dooku and Aurra Sing. Elizabeth Hand then took the reins with 2003's *Maze of Deception* and *Hunted*, which saw Boba outmaneuver Sing, battle the deadly Durge and meet Jabba the Hutt.

The story continues in April's *Boba Fett: A New Threat*. But this latest Boba adventure comes with a bonus no *Star Wars* fan can resist – a sneak peek at a new character who will play a major role in Episode III.

In *A New Threat*, Jabba gives Boba his first big assignment: to capture Wat Tambor. Fans will remember Wat Tambor as one of the Separatist conspirators who meets with Dooku in Episode II. After escaping a Republic prison, Tambor has fled to Xagobah, a strange, fogbound world covered with toxic fungi and dominated by the eerie Mazarlyan Citadel.

Boba is no longer a lost child in *A New Threat*. He races off from Tatooine in *Slave I* wearing a resized suit of his famous father's armor. But he's still far from the deadly figure who will later haunt Han Solo's

The young Boba Fett joins General Grievous and Wat Tambor on the cover of the latest *Star Wars* novel by Elizabeth Hand.



dreams. And he doesn't know that Tambor is being aided by a foe like none he's ever encountered – General Grievous, the leader of the droid army deployed on Xagobah.

Grievous' role in *A New Threat* doesn't mean Hand is privy to all the secrets of Episode III. As she explains, she was told just enough about the character's background to portray him accurately. (Her editor at Scholastic, David Levithan, knows more and was able to keep Hand from veering off course.) Still, Hand did know more than most of us, at least before the "Grievous Era" article in *Insider 75*: After being sworn to secrecy, she was given a verbal description of Grievous, followed by copies of black-and-white sketches of the character.



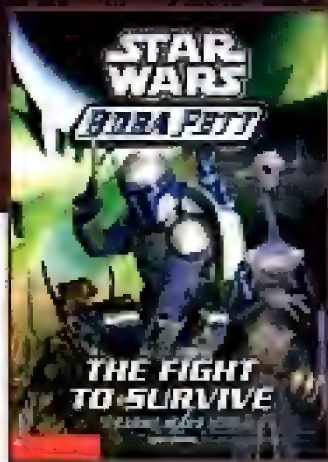
Photo by Anne Eide/Starline.com

Across the Galaxy

Elizabeth Hand is a noted novelist outside of the *Star Wars* universe too – her 1995 story "Last Summer at Mars Hill" won both the World Fantasy Award and the Nebula Award for Best Novella. (It's found in her 1996 collection of the same name.) Hand says fans of her *Star Wars* fiction who want to check out her other work might enjoy her first book, 1990's *Winterlong*, and its sequel, *Arrival Tide*.

Hand's upcoming books include *Mortal Love* and *Bibliomancy*. She's also writing the sixth *Boba Fett* novel. Unshelled at press time, it should hit store shelves in September 2004.





"That was very cool," Hand enthuses, adding that she saw "enough to get myself excited and extremely interested to see what he's going to do on-screen."

Working from preproduction art is nothing new to Hand. She's written several novelizations, from *The X-Files: Fight the Future* and *Twelve Monkeys* to *Anita and the King* and *The Affair of the Necklace*, and the novelization of the upcoming Halle Berry movie *Catwoman* is still to come. Hand says she frequently works from stills and other imagery from the movies. And she's used to keeping studio secrets, as well: To write *The X-Files: Fight the Future* novel, she screened a rough cut of the *Fight the Future* movie – sans visual effects – "all alone in a little bungalow theater on the studio lot," with a security guard keeping watch outside.

Hand says that reference is invaluable to her, even beyond providing the details she needs to pen an accurate visual description of a character. "I tend to run [a novel I'm writing] as though it's a movie in my head," she says. "I'm a very visual person."

Playing *Star Wars* in her mind's eye comes easy for Hand, who says she's seen the movies dozens of times. "I have a pretty solid sense of what the characters look like and how they move and how they interact

with their environment," she says. "It's pretty easy to plug into this whole visual system I have in my head."

Although Hand sees Boba as something of an antihero, she has sympathy for him. "As a reader but also as a writer, I tend to be drawn to dark subjects and to dark characters," Hand muses. "Part of what a writer does – hopefully – is to enable readers to identify with a character, even a flawed character."

According to Hand, part of what makes Boba easier to sympathize with is that he's still a child. While one can already see the adult flaws Boba will come to possess, she says – naming pride, stubbornness and a thirst for vengeance among them – they haven't ripened yet. As Hand observes, "Very few kids stand out as evil people. Hannibal Lecter might have been a very nice kid."

Hand sees parallels between Boba and Scholastic's other young character headed for darkness, Anakin Skywalker. Both, she notes, have lost a home and a beloved parent, both have been left on their own at a very early age, and both will suffer betrayals. (Think of that the next time you see them side by side in *The Empire Strikes Back*.) "I think Anakin works as a good mirror for what I'm trying to do with Boba," she says.

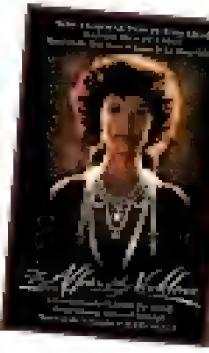
Watching her 11-year-old son, Tristan, has

Even from his earliest adventures, Boba Fett had a habit of consorting with the scum and villainy of the galaxy.

also been helpful, Hand says. "I can see the way he and his friends interact – the energy level, the rhythms of his speech," she says. "Boba seems like somebody very kinetic, and [Tristan] is exactly like that. He's very smart and doesn't sit still."

Tristan has even provided some visual aids. Hand says the original trilogy's Boba Fett is a favorite of her 18-year-old stepson and his friends, an interest Tristan also developed. In fact, she says, Tristan saved up his allowance money to buy a Boba Fett helmet from the *Star Wars* Fan Club, which gave Hand a useful prop to borrow for inspiration – and a ready answer when Scholastic's *Levithan* asked Hand if she was interested in writing the bounty hunter's adventures.

"He asked, 'Do you know about Boba Fett?' And I said, 'I know all about Boba Fett. We are a Boba Fett family.'" ☺



Elizabeth Hand is a veteran of developing screen stories into novels with adaptations ranging from the *X-Files* to *12 Monkeys* to the *Affair of the Necklace* to the upcoming *Catwoman*.

You Bad Boy, You

The adventures of Scholastic's other troubled youth, *Anakin Skywalker*, will continue. In July comes *Jedi Quest: The False Peace*, by Jude Watson, which finds Granta Omega and Jenna Zan Arbor threatening the Senate, which is struggling with its reliance on the Jedi Council. The story leads into October's as-yet-untitled 10th book, in which Anakin's rivalry with fellow Padawan Ferus Olin reaches a climax.

Obi-Wan and Anakin's tempestuous relationship will be further chronicled next spring with the second *Legacy of the Jedi* book, a multipart story starring Masters and Padawans from multiple generations. Then it'll be just a short wait for Episode III and the ruin of that relationship – and of so much more.

Stop-Motion Animation

The Clone Wars Series Comes to Comic Books

by Daniel Wallace

With an impressive pedigree, Cartoon Network's *Star Wars: Clone Wars* animated micro-series has been the marquee entry of Lucasfilm's Clone Wars multimedia campaign. Not only does it mark *Star Wars*' return to the animation medium after nearly 20 years, it also features an epic battle told in bite-size installments, the credentials of industry pro Genndy Tartakovsky (*Samurai Jack*), and a radical new design aesthetic. As conceived for the cartoon, Mace Windu looks like he could take you apart using only his knuckles.

The animated series has drawn in new fans, and Dark Horse Comics has a comic-book miniseries in place to tie in to the action unfurling on the small screen. *Clone Wars Adventures* debuts in April in a 96-page digest-sized edition. Unlike Dark Horse's more "realistic" Clone Wars comics (*Star Wars: Republic* and *Star Wars: Jedi*), this new series will feature all-new stories in the art style of the Cartoon Network show.

"These will be original stories, using the same art style and many of the characters from the cartoon series," promises writer

Haden Blackman who, with artist Ben Caldwell and others, will be bringing the miniseries to comic-book racks and bookstores. "The timeframe will [also] be roughly the same—during the height of the Clone Wars. The stories often take these characters to new worlds and put them into different situations. I want to show some new interactions between the different Jedi, like Kit Fisto and Obi-Wan."

*Illustrated: The Clone Wars and Jedi
Supreme Council, by Genndy Tartakovsky*

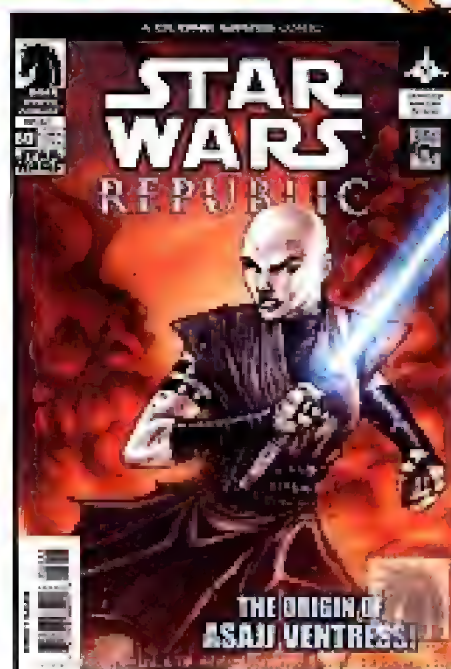




Blackman, the Expanded Universe's current multitasker-in-chief, is a fitting choice as writer. Between his involvement in LucasArts' electronic games, his guidebooks for Del Rey and his scripting duties on *Star Wars: Republic*, he has long helped to shape the biographies of the project's key players. "I developed the backstory for characters like Durge and Asajj Ventress," he says, "which were then handed off to Cartoon Network to interpret. As with all things *Star Wars*, Lucasfilm ensures that we don't contradict one another."

Since the Cartoon Network series aired in episodes that were, for the most part, only three minutes long, *Clone Wars Adventures* will adopt a "vignettes" approach. Each issue features three stories, each spotlighting unique characters battling on different galactic fronts in the war that rages from planet to planet.

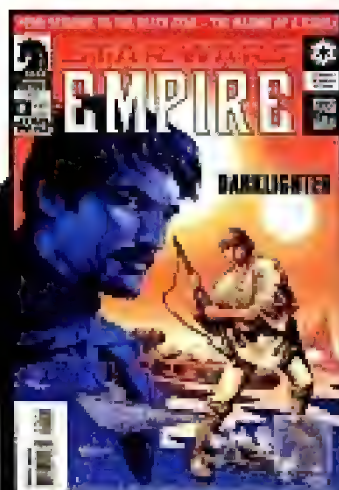
The premiere issue provides a sampler of what to expect: The first story showcases Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker on a planet of eternal night. Given that four-color illustration is the bread and butter of the



Windrunner duels with Fisto's lightning on Twin-Peak Island. Count Dooku and Asajj Ventress are back at their quivering fingertips in *Star Wars Jedi*.

comic-book medium, Blackman promises that the heroes' experience with total darkness will prove illuminating when the reader discovers how the two Jedi learn to perceive their surroundings.

After that, be prepared to join Mace Windu on a visit to Saesee Tiin's homeland of Iktotch. From there, the issue takes readers to an underwater environment where Kit Fisto continues the aquatic showboating he



Darklighter, Rebel Fighter

This April, the second volume of *Star Wars: Empire* appears in trade paperback. Entitled *Darklighter*, this volume collects the multipart tale that explored the history of Luke Skywalker's childhood friend Biggs Darklighter. If you only know Biggs as the mustachioed guy who met an explosive end during the Death Star trench run, *Darklighter* might open your mind. The series covers Biggs' first days as an Imperial officer (still wearing that cap!) and the musing on board the corvette *Rand Ecliptic*, which brought Biggs and several of his comrades over to the Rebel side. A second tale relates the life history of Alliance general Rotta Sewell, a larger-than-life figure filled with moral contradictions. Both stories are written by Eisner-award-winning scribe Paul Chadwick and originally appeared as *Empire* 8 through 12, and 15. The Biggs adventure is illustrated by Doug Wheatley, while Thomas Giorello does the artistic honors on Sewell's tale.

exhibited in the TV micro-series. The later issues of *Clone Wars Adventures* will bring other Jedi – including Yoda – into the mix, but Blackman feels it's important to have at least one Obi-Wan and Anakin story per issue to ground the audience with the primary characters.

Artist Ben Caldwell is a new face among *Star Wars* illustrators, but he's certainly a veteran *Star Wars* fan. More than just a movie buff, he points out that as a kid he read the classic Brian Daley adventure *Han Solo at Stars' End* "about a billion times."

Caldwell is approaching the *Clone Wars* project with a background in children's-book illustration (including several *Wonder Woman* stories and *Action! Cartooning*, a "How to Draw" title). He has also worked as

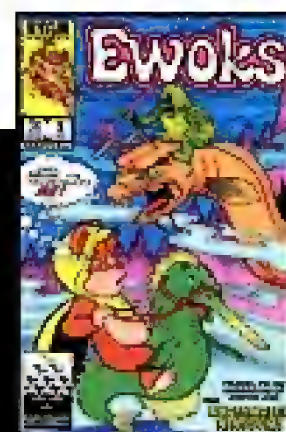
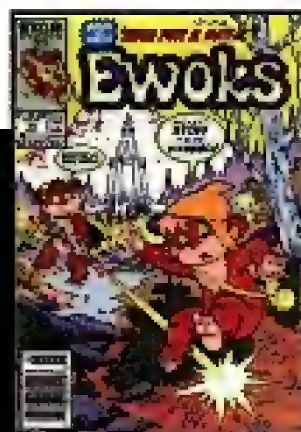
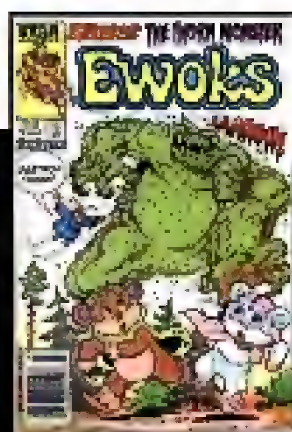
a toy designer, where his efforts have made it to the shelves as plastic playthings based on *The Lord of the Rings*, *X-Men*, *Spider-Man* and *The Osbournes*.

The *Clone Wars Adventures* will be Caldwell's first published comic, although he hopes to follow it up with his original series *The Darel Detectives*. It was his artwork for *Darel* that opened the right door at the right time when Dark Horse needed an artist with a talent for stylized action.

"At the 2002 Comic-Con International I went to the Dark Horse portfolio review and pitched my own comics series," Caldwell explains. "Apparently, editor Chris Warner showed my art to other people, and six months later Randy Stradley called me up to do a short *Star Wars* sample as part of the Dark Horse proposal to do the miniseries."

Caldwell's finished designs follow the house style established by Genndy Tartakovsky's animation team (see "The Chosen One" in *Insider* 69) – clean, exaggerated and energized.

"The Cartoon Network style is excellent for more action-oriented stories," he says. "After all, nothing really says action like a heap of Jedi and clones tearing up the Republic, and the stories and art need to reflect that action. I like seeing a different take on an established classic. This chunk of the story that's part of the *Star Wars* canon – but distinct from the movies – is an ideal place to try out a few things." 🌟

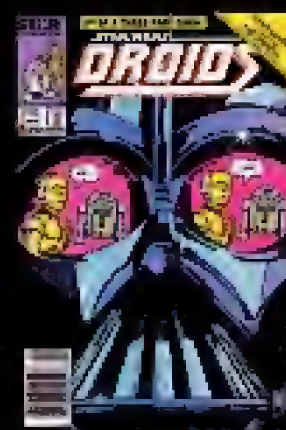
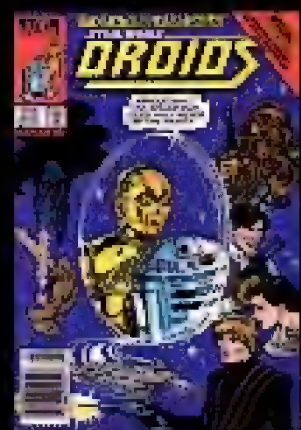
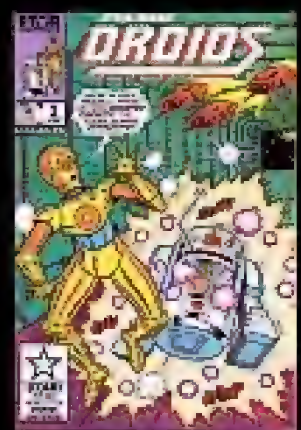
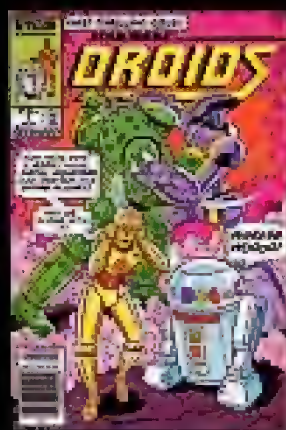


From Cartoons to Comics

Dark Horse's *Clone Wars Adventures*, the tie-in to Cartoon Network's *Clone Wars* animated micro-series, isn't the first time a *Star Wars* concept has made the curious journey from movie to TV cartoon to comic book. Back in 1985, *Ewoks* and *Droids* began a two-season run as part of ABC's Saturday-morning kids' lineup. Two comic-book series soon followed, both published by Marvel's Star Comics imprint.

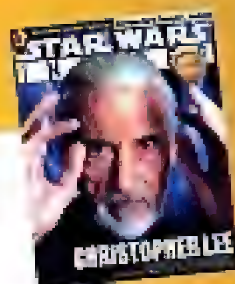
Ewoks lasted 14 issues and dealt with the comic capers of Wicket and his tribe. The stories were written for a very young audience, with a heavy emphasis on the cute, and are unlikely to captivate modern collectors. A highlight, however, is a crossover with the *Droids* characters that somehow manages to involve time travel.

The *Droids* series had a shorter life – vanishing after only eight issues – but like the cartoon it was based on, it told several memorable buddy stories of R2-D2 and C-3PO within the confines of the juvenile-story structure. If you're curious enough to seek it out, try to find the last few issues, which provide an alternate telling of the story of *Star Wars: A New Hope* as seen through the droids' photoreceptors.



STAR WARS INSIDER

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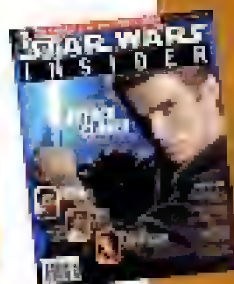
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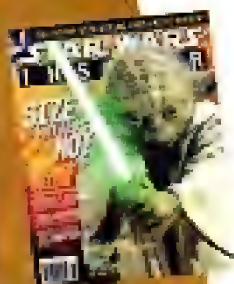
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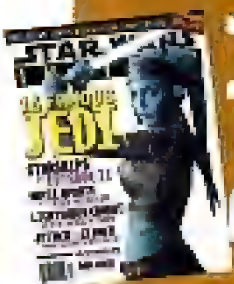
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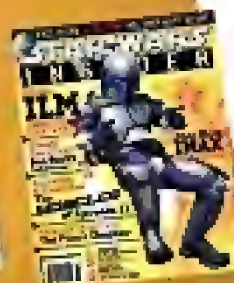
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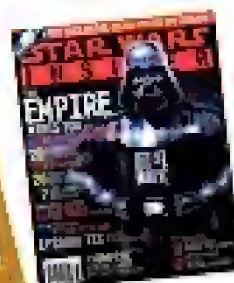
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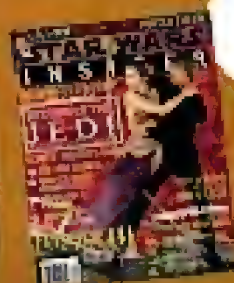
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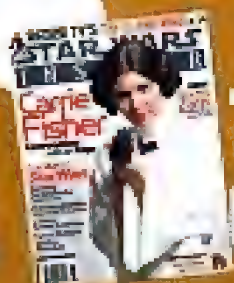
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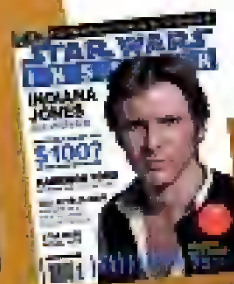
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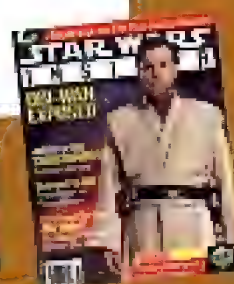
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Scouting the Galaxy

by Steve Sansweet

***Will Jeremy Bulloch's Name Destroy My Fett?
Join Me, and Together We Will ...
Have Great Fun at the Summer Conventions!***

It's convention season again, and I have a feeling that this one is going to be an extraordinary one for *Star Wars* fans and collectors. Right now, I'm preparing my own itinerary. First stop was Jedi-Con 2004 in Düsseldorf, run by the Official German *Star Wars* Fan Club. A high point for me is always meeting and talking to fellow fans; a collector highlight was the specially packaged convention set of two action figures. Next on the schedule was WonderCon in my own backyard of San Francisco, followed by *Star Wars* Weekends at Walt Disney World (I'll be there with the Official Fan Club the first weekend in June) and *Star Wars* Encuentros, run by the Official Fan Club in Mexico, also sure to be filled with exclusive collectibles.

But the granddaddy of all shows is Comic-Con International in San Diego from July 22 to 25. Last year this Mecca of pop culture attracted 75,000 attendees, and I want to extend a personal invitation to all of you to come on down. Comic-Con holds very special memories for Lucasfilm and *Star Wars* because back in 1976 it was the first place fans found out about the galaxy far, far away. *Star Wars* pioneered the convention route that's been followed by so many movies since.

I extend a special invitation this year because *Star Wars* will be there in force! From a huge pavilion on the exhibition floor to exclusive merchandise, such as a new silver saga action figure, to practically nonstop *Star Wars* programming from Thursday on, this is the place to be this summer if you can



attend only one convention. If you can attend more, or if you live in a different part of the country, look for the traveling *Star Wars* presentation in Chicago at Wizard World, in Indianapolis at Gen Con, and in Atlanta for Dragon*Con. Please make a point of coming up to me to say hello at any or all of the shows.

Displays of Affection

I have a hanging display for the *Star Wars* Trilogy Special Edition on VHS. It has several characters on it and is cut out around their heads. I can't find its value in any of my books. Please help. Also, how can I buy store displays? When I ask at the store, the clerks always say they have to send them back to the vendors. Why?

Jim Walters
Canton, Ohio

Store displays are funny things. Meant to be used for a brief period to promote the sale of something, they are often nicer or more exciting than the product they're pushing (although not in this case, of course). Most collectors couldn't care less about displays, but some of us prize them highly, particularly if they're especially attractive or tie in to another area of our collecting, such as vintage Kenner displays (some of which

go for thousands of dollars). Video displays – especially recent ones – are produced in large quantities, and while I'm not sure exactly which one you're referring to, it's probably a \$15 to \$25 item. As for the hokum that store clerks give you when you ask for a display – "Oh, George Lucas is personally going around to all of our stores and picking these back up" – most likely someone working for the store has already claimed the displays, or the employees just don't want to be bothered.

Executor Decision

Last Saturday, while shopping in Amsterdam, I found a remarkable item: the *Star Wars* Executor Box, containing all three original-trilogy movies, all four documentaries, art prints, a script, a certificate, and so on. The box is limited to 20,000 copies worldwide, as you must know. How much is this box worth?



It is still sealed, and I paid £140 (\$175) for it. I know that I paid a lot, but the beauty of the box and its contents (not to mention the fact that it's limited!) made me a really happy Star Wars freak! Luckily, I already have the documentaries on tape already, so I don't have to remove the seal.

Dennis Pellegroni
Eindhoven, The Netherlands

It's a great find Dennis, although you certainly paid on the high side for this treasure. Recent eBay buyers have paid \$125 (about £102) for it. But it is very rare, and who knows when you might stumble across another – especially in sealed mint condi-

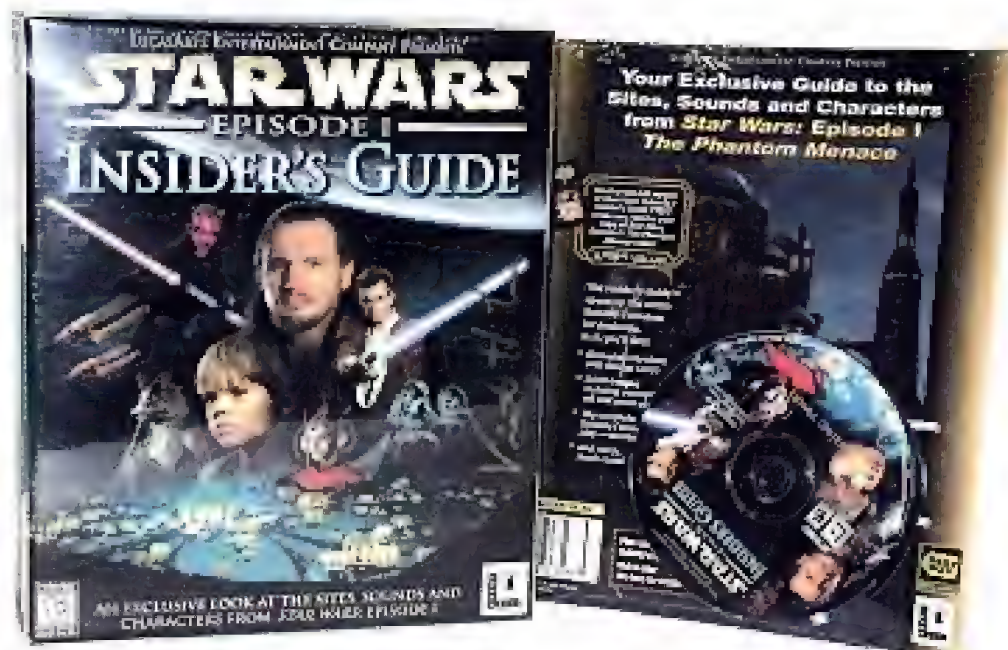
tion. This black embossed-metal boxed set from the United Kingdom is by far the classiest Star Wars video collector set ever. In addition to the three movies and nearly five hours of supplemental material on the fourth VHS PAL tape, it contains a special book with the continuity scripts of all the films, six prints of matte paintings used in the making of the movies, three prints of John Alvin's art for the video release outside the United States, and a numbered certificate of authenticity featuring Darth Vader.

Vaporware Collectibles

I was browsing the Star Wars website's Cargo Bay area for collectibles when I came across a couple of listings for items that I would like to own. Unfortunately, I've been searching for months and have not come up with any other hint that they ever existed. One is called "Smithsonian Exhibit," which is listed as a video published by Antenna Audio on Dec. 11, 1998. Could this just be a video used at the exhibit that was not available to the public? The other item is titled "Episode I Storybook (Ages 4 to 6)" and is listed as a Wal-Mart exclusive CD-ROM published on Sept. 29, 1999. Do you know where I might find either of these items?

Rob Cavicchio
Carlsbad, Calif.

Nope, because neither exists. I guess this falls in the category of "nobody's perfect," including Cargo Bay. The first item should refer to the special interactive CD audio tour that Antenna Audio did for the touring Magic of Myth exhibition, which opened at the Smithsonian Institution. It was never available for sale to the public, and required special rental devices to play as you toured the exhibit. There were also a very limited number of discs distributed to the media.





The second entry still has me scratching my head. It lists the author as Haden Blackman, who was the mad genius behind LucasArts' *Star Wars: Episode I Insider's Guide* CD-ROM. It was widely available. An exclusive version was packaged with each reservation copy of the *The Phantom Menace* on video, but that was from Best Buy, not Wal-Mart. So search no more ... and let's hope that both of these items have been removed by the time this column appears.

Signing Bonus?

I recently purchased a carded "Silver Convention Exclusive Boba Fett." The card is signed vertically in silver ink on the right side by the actor who played Boba Fett in the original trilogy, Jeremy Bulloch. I have no doubts as to its authenticity, as I bought it from a friend at a solid price. My question is about the effect of the signature itself. Will the ink from the autograph hasten the deterioration of the card?

Anthony Williams
Dayton, Ohio

Just when I think that my knowledge can't be rested any further ... The bubble on the card is more likely to yellow before the silver ink causes card deterioration. And hopefully neither of those things will happen in your lifetime. The

larger question is whether the addition of any autograph to what may be a rare collectible will raise, lower or have little impact on its value. There's no easy answer; many collectors will blanch when they see someone asking for an autograph on a rare vintage collectible, saying that the value plummets because the item isn't in its original state anymore. But that doesn't stop fans who are more interested in

the personal joy that such an autograph on a treasured item brings. On newer items such as your Fett, the plus-minus debate probably nets out even.

Accreditation

Recently I discovered on eBay a rare original movie poster for the first *Star Wars* movie. It lists no credits. Sadly, the starting bid is \$49.99, and since I am 11, I cannot buy it. I know it is worth more than that. So how much is it really worth?

Trey Ballard
Brandon, Miss.

If the poster includes no credits, there's a 99% chance that it's a commercial reprint and not a theatrical poster, making its value somewhere in the \$5 to \$10 range. Sometimes being 11 can be a real money saver!

Oops, He Did It Again

In *Insider 74* you wrote that a licensed version of sabacc was never produced. Not entirely true. Although it was never released as a standalone product, a sabacc card deck with rules was included in the West End Games' *Star Wars* adventure *Crisis on Cloud City*, produced in 1989.

Bill Smith
York, Penn.

Thanks Bill ... and all the rest of you who wrote to me about this oversight. Of course, I meant to say that! Actually, if anyone should know about the sabacc deck, it's Bill, who was an editor-writer-developer for West End Games back in the days when the company was just about the only *Star Wars* licensee making new





What're You Trying to Push on Us?

For the last eight years I've been going to a little antique store in a tiny town; the owner is a good family friend. In one of the display cases there are a lot of original *Star Wars* figures. One figure that I would love to have is Luke Skywalker from *Return of the Jedi* in his black Jedi outfit. The only problem is, he's \$42. The owner can't come down on the price because the woman who owns the *Star Wars* pieces won't let her. I was wondering if the price was fair, as Luke has some paint missing, doesn't have any weapons, and doesn't have his cape. If it isn't a fair price, I'm hoping a write-up about it in *Insider* will convince the woman once and for all that she should come down a little. But I'm not holding my breath since the figure has been sitting in the display case for eight years without being sold.

Deana Rac
Texas City, Texas

Well, Deana, if an out-of-package figure with some paint missing and no cape or accessories has been sitting in this lady's case for eight years, my saying something probably won't help. But I'll give it a go: \$10 maximum, although I wouldn't pay half that for a figure in the condition you describe. You'd do better on eBay. ☹

Adam Hamlette
Middleton, Wis.

Less than the money you spent to have it graded. A figure placed on the wrong card? I hate to tell you, but it can happen very easily when thousands of figures are being produced each day. I don't consider it a variation, which to me means a major change in a figure or a card during the production process. A production item like yours isn't a variation; it's a mistake.

Scouting for Answers?

Please send your questions and comments about collectibles to: SCOUTING THE GALAXY, P.O. Box 2808, Petaluma, CA 94953-2808. Or you may e-mail them to: scouting@palco.com, making sure to also put SCOUTING in the subject line and YOUR HOMETOWN in the e-mail along with your FULL NAME. Letters won't be answered without both. Individual replies aren't possible because of time constraints, but we'll answer the questions of broadest interest in the column. Letters are edited for grammar, sense and length.

products. While I mentioned games from WEG and Wizards of the Coast, I missed this one, which actually had a deck of card-stock cards and rules. I still stand by part of my original answer about there not being any "real" sabacc game: In the "real" sabacc, there are 76 cards in the shape of gaming chips with

electronic innards that make them change value randomly during play. See what Bill's up to now and all of his contributions to the *Star Wars* galaxy at www.billsmithbooks.com.

Sadly Mistaken

My wife and I went *Star Wars* hunting last year and found a Luke Skywalker (Bespin Duel) figure. On the top of the card it says, "Includes 3 A76 button cell batteries," and on the back it pictures R2-D2 from the *Attack of the Clones* line. I sent it to AFA and they graded it a 50. Nobody I know knows of this variation, so I was hoping you could give me a clue about how much it might be worth.

Adam Hamlette
Middleton, Wis.

Less than the money you spent to have it graded. A figure placed on the wrong card? I hate to tell you, but it can happen very easily when thousands of figures are being produced each day. I don't consider it a variation, which to me means a major change in a figure or a card during the production process. A production item like yours isn't a variation; it's a mistake.



The Art of *Star Wars* Packaging & the Galactic Heroes

by starwars.hasbro.com

In the January issue of *Insider*, "Toy Box" presented the Original Trilogy Collection, which features packaging inspired by the Kenner toys of the 1970s and 1980s. Here are some additional details on the toy lines that make up the OTC.

"Vintage" 3 3/4-Inch Original Trilogy Collection Figures

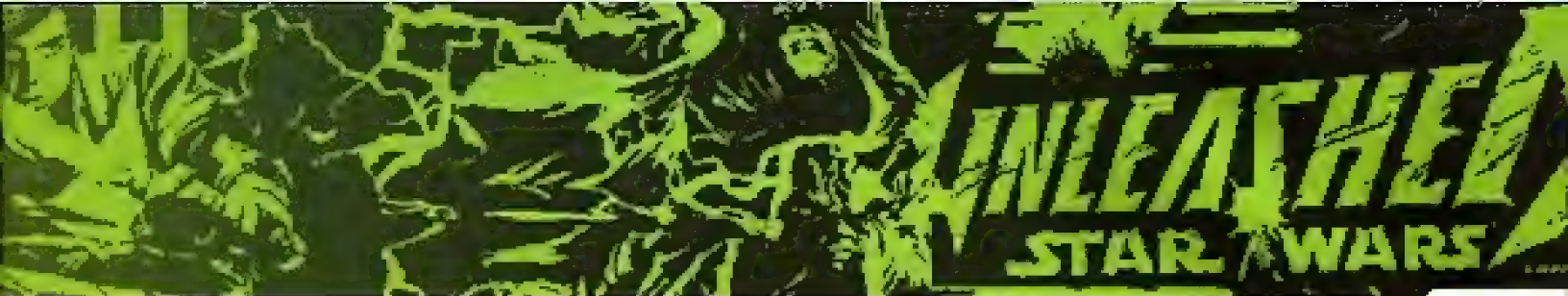
Hasbro believes that the new Vintage figures are the best 3-3/4-inch *Star Wars* figures ever

created. They feature premium decoration, enhanced articulation, and, where appropriate, soft-goods accessories such as cloaks and capes. They're packaged on reproductions of original card fronts from the 1970s and 1980s, which even include authentic inconsistencies, such as the white price-tag placeholder and the doubled silver bar that appeared on *Star Wars* logo cards but not on *The Empire Strikes Back* or *Return of the Jedi* cards. While Hasbro would love to pose these figures in the package to show all of

the incredible articulation, it was more important to stay true to the original coffin-style blister packaging, so these figures are displayed just as they were "back in the day."

While Hasbro did its best to re-create the card fronts accurately, restrictions prevent the use of the original legal text and product numbers. But even the old Kenner logo is in place, along with the original character photos. The new card back shows the original version of each figure for reference. And the entire blister card is protected in a new





official *Star Wars* protective clamshell that encases the figure. The clamshell blister is embossed with a *Star Wars* logo and has a "J-hook" so you can easily hang it with the rest of your collection.

There are 12 new Vintage 3-3/4-inch figures. The collection includes:

Star Wars: A New Hope

- Luke Skywalker in Tatooine farm tunic
- Obi-Wan "Ben" Kenobi in Jedi robes
- Han Solo in black Corellian spacer vest and captain's pants
- Princess Leia in traditional gown of Alderaan royal family

The Empire Strikes Back

- Darth Vader with classic black cloak
- Yoda in Dagobah cloak
- Lando Calrissian in baron's cape
- C-3PO with classic "metallized" gold decoration

Return of the Jedi

- Stormtrooper in classic armor
- Boba Fett with flight suit and armor from Jabba the Hutt's sail barge
- Chewbacca with bandolier
- R2-D2 with "metallized" dome and pop-up sensor scope

"Vintage" 12-Inch Original Trilogy Collection Figures

The Vintage 12-inch figures are similar to the Vintage 3-3/4-inch figures in that they're made with premium articulation and decoration, including soft goods. Hasbro is again reproducing the original packaging as accurately as possible while adhering to legal restrictions. As in the original release, the box features an extended flap for character graphics. The entire box will be packaged inside a premium, protective window box with Original Trilogy Collection graphics; it's perfect for display. There are three figures in the collection, one from each movie. (No 12-inch *Return of the Jedi* figures were made in the vintage era, so Hasbro has created a new design in the vintage style for this line.)



The figures are:

- Luke Skywalker (*Star Wars: A New Hope*)
- Boba Fett (*The Empire Strikes Back*)
- Stormtrooper (*Return of the Jedi*)

Basic 3-3/4-Inch Original Trilogy Collection Figures

As mentioned in the previous issue's "Toy Box," Hasbro is rereleasing classic heroes and villains from the original trilogy in the basic figure line so that new fans can play with the likes of Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker and Han Solo.

While these figures will have "classic" design elements such as the black-and-silver

color scheme, new character-specific movie scenes will be used as background images to place each figure in action in its package. Each card will also include Rebel or Imperial icons on the upper-left corner of the front of the packaging to signify the "good guys" and the "bad guys." Hardcore *Star Wars* fans will notice that the Rebel logo (which is blue) and the Empire logo (which is red) are technically incorrect: Hasbro is trying to keep the color scheme simple for today's kids, since red typically means "bad guy," just like Darth Vader's lightsaber, and blue usually means "good guy," just like Obi-Wan's lightsaber.

Unleashed Figures

Four previously released Unleashed figures are being repackaged with new character-specific artwork: Luke Skywalker (*Return of the Jedi*) and Darth Sidious are shown here; Obi-Wan Kenobi and Princess Leia are the other two figures to look out for.





The Galactic Heroes Are Coming!

Coming this fall to a Wal-Mart near you are the Galactic Heroes! This style of figure was launched in 2002 by Hasbro's Playskool group. After receiving tremendous feedback from Star Wars fans across the country, Hasbro decided to bring back these incredibly fun figures for young and older fans alike.

Hasbro will be introducing the Galactic Heroes as movie-themed two-packs:

Wave 1 – *Star Wars: A New Hope*

- Obi-Wan Kenobi and Darth Vader
- Luke Skywalker and R2-D2
- Chewbacca and C-3PO
- Han Solo and Princess Leia

Wave 2 – *Attack of the Clones*

- Anakin Skywalker and Padmé Amidala
- Jango Fett and Obi-Wan Kenobi
- Yoda and a clone trooper

Wave 3 – *The Empire Strikes Back*

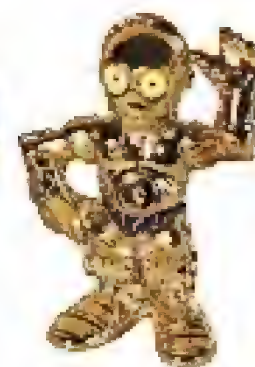
- IG-88 and Zuckuss
- Bossk and 4-LOM
- Baba Fett and Dengar

Wider retail distribution of Galactic Heroes figures and vehicles is planned for the future. 🌌

Want to ask Hasbro a question? E-mail toy-box@palco.com.

In Insider 75's "Toy Box" column, Hasbro announced new retail exclusions for fall 2004. Please note that sometimes retailer plans change.

For up-to-date information, visit www.hasbro.com.



Archive

Expanding Your Collection

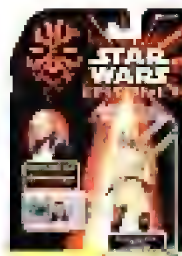
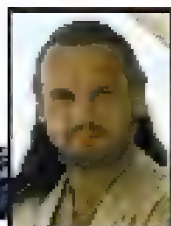
In 1999, Chronicle Books published *Star Wars: The Action Figure Archives*, a definitive reference book for the toy lines from Kenner and Hasbro up to 1998. Since Hasbro has continued to produce *Star Wars* figures, this column picks up where the Archive left off, providing collectors with a living reference for the hobby.

Collection I **3.99**

QUI-GON JINN

(Jedi Duel) with Lightsaber

The Jedi Master of Obi-Wan Kenobi, Qui-Gon Jinn becomes the guide to the Jedi Order, not only for Anakin Skywalker, but also for newcomers. One of Hasbro's strategies with Collection I figures was to ensure that they were fun for kids to play with. To this end, Qui-Gon and other fighters have extra accessories, including at the wrists and elbows.

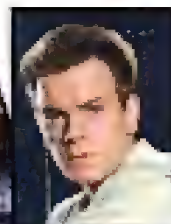


Collection I **3.99**

Obi-WAN KENOBI

(Jedi Duel) with Lightsaber

In Episode I, Obi-Wan Kenobi is a Padawan, learning the ways of the Force from Qui-Gon Jinn. His Master's final lesson comes with his dying breath, as Obi-Wan vows to train Anakin Skywalker. This figure also has extra articulation, allowing him to grip his weapon with both hands.

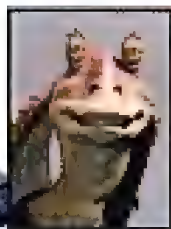


Collection I **3.99**

JAR JAR BINKS

with Gungan Battle Staff

Banished from the underwater city of Otoh Gunga because of his clumsy habit of accidentally demolishing things, the long-limbed, gangly Gungan was an important element in opening up the *Star Wars* universe to a sponger audience. Jar Jar Binks was the first character developed for Episode I. In the movie, however, he never does carry the long battle staff that was included with the figure.

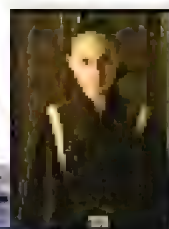


Collection I **3.99**

QUEEN AMIDALA

(Naboo) with Blaster Pistols

Having revealed her true identity, Queen Padmé Amidala leads the fight to take back the Trade Federation. The Queen carried with her two versions of her blaster pistol. The longer-barreled gun is used in the Trade Federation, while the smaller weapon is hidden inside a secret compartment in her throne. The Queen may be young, but she knows how to plan ahead.

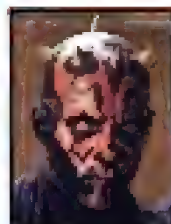
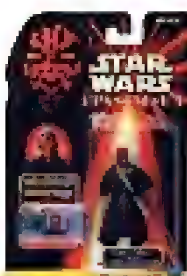
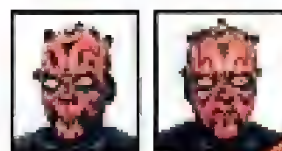


Collection I **3.99**

DARTH MAUL

(Jedi Duel) with Double-Bladed Lightsaber

Darth Maul was the most popular figure of the Episode I line. Interest in the character was so high that Hasbro shipped entire cases filled exclusively with Darth Maul figures, yet it still took several months to satisfy the initial demand. Some variation information: a "black-vested" version that lacks the gray panel on Maul's lower tunic, but this is really a manufacturing error, not a true variation. The first release had an inaccurate facial tattoo pattern; a later print variation corrected the problem.



COMMTech

Episode I figurines used the novel **COMMTech** (COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY) system, a plastic shell enclosing an electronic chip and a small photo and voice description of each character. The chip could also be used as a voice recorder. A small card (the **COMMTech** card) would reproduce spoken and written words and control lights to match the quality of the voice. Some used two microchips. Because Hasbro didn't have the technology to insert the small chip on the front of the full Episode I line and CommTech was the leader in a niche market, they included a card called Episode I Droid.



Variations

The early Episode I figures all had minor card variations, with and without (and for information: Research and Technological, the company that holds the patents) Serial line **COMMTech** card technology. Additionally, the characters of Anakin, the card fronts of Jar Jar Binks and the Hologram Droid were printed in slightly different sizes. Darth Maul actually showed up in five different, very minor card variations, but only in the product number. Early on, the Darth Maul character is printed. The **COMMTech** card of variation numbers, but very few collectors seek out the most variation items.

Collection I **3.99**

BATTLE DROID

with Blaster Rifle

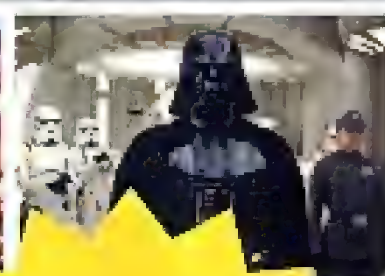
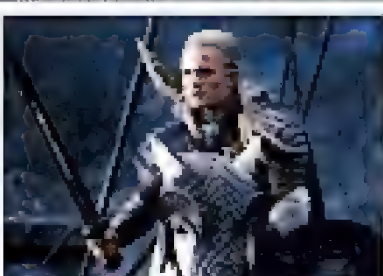
The Battle Droid showed up with four different decorative schemes, often referred to as Chase, Chase, Chase, and either Sleek or Sleeked. These decorative variations were shipped in approximately equal numbers. The rifle can be carried by the droid or pegged into a slot in the figure's backpack.



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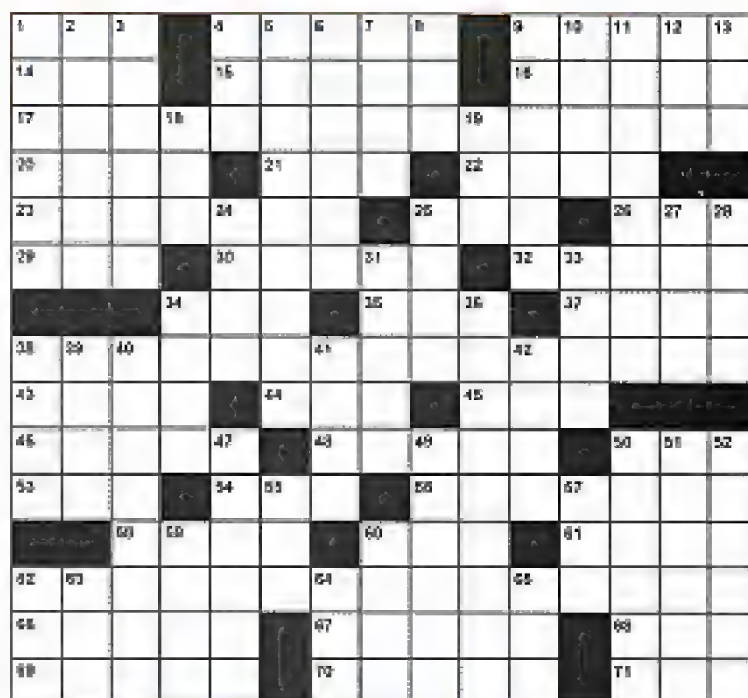
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Headlines from TATOOINE TIMES SPORTS PAGE

by Mike Selinker

ACROSS

- 1 Style of *Star Wars* Galactic Battlegrounds game, for short
- 4 Solo or Aslan to Vader
- 9 Beginning
- 14 Ancho's "before"
- 15 Russian pastimes
- 16 Idiots
- 17 THIS SOCIAL BASEBALL TEAM SIGNS YOUNG ANAKIN
- 20 ___-Um (Dark Horse Jedi)
- 21 Espor or Enley
- 22 Public Enemy rapper Flavor ___
- 23 Like Coruscant, post-civil war
- 25 Movie *Trilogy* Secreted interregator Inuit
- 26 Patronize Dai's Olin
- 29 Hebrew "times"
- 30 NBA's Shaquille
- 32 Steak option
- 34 Jason Solo, upon moving to Coruscant
- 35 Homer's neighbor Flanders
- 37 Party to
- 39 THESE BAY AREA SAND PEOPLE SAY "HUT ONE HUT TWO!"
- 40 "What ___ happen to me?" (Padmé)
- 44 Widge's Gamble Captain ___ Neeka
- 45 Hwy
- 46 "I should have expected to find you holding Vader's ___" (Leia to Tarkin)
- 48 Computer stations
- 50 Health venue
- 53 Screw up
- 54 Old Republic, e.g.
- 56 Shot on Anakin when he professes his love to Padmé
- 58 Gilbert of *Rosencore*
- 60 "It's ___ risk..." (see 50-Down)
- 61 Ansel
- 62 MANY BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS GROW IN THIS JER POKING X-WING
- 63 Ewan's costar in *Down With Love*
- 67 Alphabetic string
- 68 Ending for "Hut"
- 69 Peruvian range
- 70 For example, Art Carney on *The Holiday Special*
- 71 Rds.

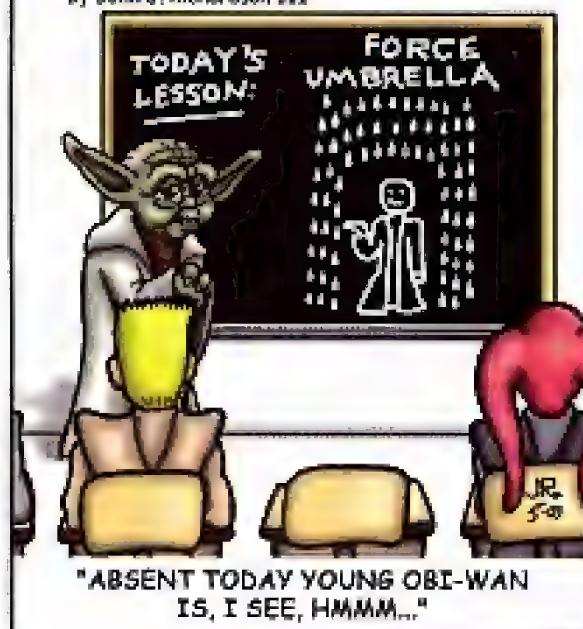


DOWN

- 1 Dasha Guerfel is one on Corellia
- 2 Han, on ship manifests
- 3 Body in Episodes I and II
- 4 Star for Sosa
- 5 Type of damage in *Star Wars* Galaxies
- 6 Asteroid in *Star Wars* *SC3*
- 7 Son of Sath
- 8 Queen Amidala ___ Galm (Episode I tie-in)
- 9 Typical quantity of shares
- 10 Pic in which Ewan McGregor plays James Joyce
- 11 Fett's ship
- 12 Miscellaneous, briefly
- 13 Moo ___-lung
- 18 Dining necessity
- 19 Frequently
- 24 ___ & the Gang
- 25 *Sopranos* child star Robert
- 27 Kuchan Yang leader Nam ___
- 28 Some bills
- 31 Muppets from Space actress MacDowell
- 32 Whole away
- 34 Ring results
- 36 Jedi Masters who've given in
- 38 Scrabble piece
- 39 Computer owner
- 40 *Neo Solo* at ___ (book set in a far-flung sector)
- 41 MIL in Nicaragua
- 42 "Make ___" (Picard order)
- 47 Jedi Knights, e.g.
- 48 Torch socket
- 50 "...and your ___ aren't that attuned, young apprentice" (Obi-Wan)
- 51 Unwaving sort
- 52 Highest points
- 55 Yung ___ (telescope triller)
- 57 Pink Vicious
- 59 Busy as ___
- 60 Bijan word for "not allowed"
- 62 ___ la la
- 63 Egg layer
- 64 Witch
- 65 ___ & Em (Kellogg's characters)

PADAWANS

By John J. Richardson III



ANSWERS to this puzzle appear on page 94 of this issue.

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Answers to Your Star Wars Questions

with Pablo Hidalgo, Internet content provider for starwars.com

In *Star Wars: A New Hope*, why do the stormtroopers have to blast a wall to get to the detention block? Why don't they just use the elevator?

Look again: They do use the elevators. As Threepio says, there is only one way in or out of the detention center, and that's the turbolift lobby at the main entrance. The doors that the stormtroopers blast their way through are the turbolift doors. Presumably Han locked the doors to keep out unwanted company.



If the stormtroopers are supposed to be clone troopers, why do most of them have different sizes and voices in *Star Wars: A New Hope*?

The realities of filmmaking in the 1970s and 1980s dictated the differences in stormtrooper voices and sizes in the original trilogy.

Completely computer-generated, exactly identical troopers were not possible until a few decades down the road.

However, there is also an in-universe explanation, provided by none other than George Lucas himself. During the production of Episode III, Lucas told crewmembers that the stormtroopers seen in Episode IV are – in the story world – made from multiple sources. That is, they're not all Jango clones. By that time in the saga, other clone hosts have been selected.

Lucas intimated that the selection process has become more political than strategic in some cases – a highly placed officer's cousin might be selected over a more capable specimen, for example. This politicization results in less-than-ideal candidates, which could explain some of the embarrassing marksmanship witnessed in the original trilogy.

In addition to multiple clone-hosts, stormtrooper ranks also include conscripted soldiers and academy graduates, as has been chronicled in the Expanded Universe for many years now.

Why are Ki-Adi-Mundi, Mace Windu and Yoda the only Jedi Council members who get to speak when on-screen? I know the others talk in novels, but come on, the Separatist movement and attempted assassination of Senator Amidala are way more important than the escape of Captain Cohl! The opinions of the other Jedi Masters would be very useful in such intense situations. What gives?

The less hurried pace of a novel (like *Cloak of Deception*, which you refer to in your question) or a comic book better allows for other Jedi Council members to weigh in with their opinions. The quick pace of the films and the sheer amount of information conveyed in a two-or-so-hour movie means that the various meeting scenes in the saga must be kept brief, so not everyone gets a say.

As a result, not everyone in the Council is an actor. In some cases, they're models hired for their exotic appearance. In other cases,

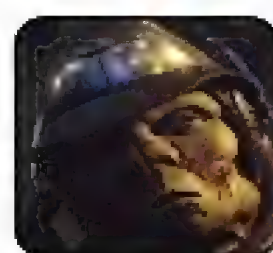


they're members of the Creature Shop who crafted the aliens. For example, when Episode I was cast, only three Council members needed to deliver lines. Silas Carson plays Ki-Adi-Mundi, Samuel L. Jackson is Mace Windu, and Frank Oz plays Yoda. Dialogue deemed worth including in a Jedi Council scene goes to established actors.

But what about giving a Yoda or Ki-Adi-Mundi line to Plo Koon or Adi Gallia? As scripted, Episode III may let us hear some more Council members speak. Shaak Ti and Plo Koon have both been given lines, although neither of them is in a Council meeting at the time. We'll have to wait and see whether they make the final cut.

In *Attack of the Clones*, when Zam Wesell is struck by Jango Fett's poison dart, her last words sound something like "Wee shanit sleemo." Is this supposed to mean something, or is it an anagram or some other hidden meaning? I can't figure it out, and I don't speak Clawdite-ese!

Those who own a copy of Ben Burtt's entertaining *Star Wars Galactic Phrasebook and Travel Guide* should be able to piece together Zam's last words. They're Huttese. She says "Murashani sleemo," which translates into "Bounty hunter slimeball." It seems that Zam didn't quite agree with Jango's methods of silencing her.



What exactly is a Twi'lek head-tail, and what purpose does it serve?

Also known as *lekku*, head-tails serve important communicative, sensory and cognitive roles in Twi'lek culture and physiology. They are sometimes called *tchin-tchun*, with *tchin* describing the right lekku and *tchun* describing the left.

Though not entirely prehensile, the head-tails' thick tentacles are capable of movement, and Twi'leks can articulate them in subtle ways to add inflection, color and meaning to their spoken language. In fact, the Twi'lek language is dependent on lekku for a full range of expression, and Twi'leks have developed a number of secret languages that consist solely of lekku movements, unreadable and unspeakable by any non-Twi'leks.

The head-tails are also lined with nerve receptors, making them very sensitive to touch. Their large surface area allows Twi'leks to gather information about temperature and humidity much quicker than, say, humans. Since lekku can be very sensitive to touch, caressing of head-tails plays a large role in Twi'lek sensuality and lovemaking.

Finally, the head-tails themselves are actually extensions of Twi'lek brain tissue. Sometimes crudely called "brain tails," this tissue doesn't control any vital functions but can contain long-term memories. When Aayla Secura was robbed of her memory, Jedi therapists were able to restore many of them since they were stored in her lekku.

Why does Jabba pick Gamorreans as his guards? They're not exactly the smartest creatures to pick.

Loyalty matters more to Jabba the Hutt than intelligence. His



criminal court is filled with backstabbing, so the corpulent gangster takes some solace in knowing that his most heavily armed bodyguards are too stupid to turn on him.

Jabba knows full well about his guards' intellectual shortcomings. Gamorrean tradition holds that in order to win a pig guard's respect, you have to beat the snot out of him. Jabba one-ups this custom by challenging several Gamorreans to a blindfolded match. When it comes time to spar, all the Gamorreans are blindfolded, so they can't see that it is Jabba's other underlings who knock them senseless, while the Hutt reclines and watches the whole thing unfold.

I read online somewhere that Endor suffers an immense cataclysm after the destruction of the second Death Star, and all the Ewoks are killed. Is this true?

Don't buy into anti-Ewok propaganda. It sounds like the Empire's behind that particular rumor.



Though many learned scholars and students of physics have micro-examined the *Star Wars* films for scientific accuracy and have come away with an entertaining degree of consistency, in some cases, science has to be thrown out the window. Armchair physicists have to look away when a screaming TIE fighter passes through the vacuum of space, when a particularly volatile explosion combusts in an airless void, or when giant yellow letters inexplicable to the known rules of the universe float lazily into infinity. Not to put too fine a point on it, but it's only a movie.

And it's a movie with a happy ending. Though there are undoubtedly any number of physical models that would indicate that the detonation of a moon-sized object in the upper atmosphere of a forest planetoid would wreak untold havoc on the local ecology, that's not what happens. It was George Lucas' intent that the fuzzy little Ewoks and their Rebel friends live happily ever after, and nuclear winters don't fit into his model.

But here is a pseudoscientific explanation – from an unlikely source: In *The Glove of Darth Vader*, a children's book published in the early 1990s, is a description of a wormhole that opened up during the Death Star's fiery demise and sucked debris – including Darth Vader's indestructible glove (yeah, you read that correctly) – all the way across the galaxy to the planet Mon Calamari.

If we accept the hazy rules of hypermatter quasi-physics and plot-convenient wormholes, then surely suggesting that the worst of the Death Star fallout also got sucked out into hyperspace isn't too much of a stretch.

Why is Jar Jar Binks banned from the Gungan city? I can't understand what he's saying.

I take it that the answer of "Booming the gasser and crashing the boss' hey-blibber" isn't that descriptive? A



gasser is a Gungan cooking device. Jar Jar accidentally blows up a gasser when he is working as a waiter at a catered event for Boss Nass. He next crashes Nass' heyblibber, which is a Gungan luxury vehicle. These are the latest in a string of clumsy accidents that finally get on Boss Nass' fraying nerves.

In the original *The Empire Strikes Back*, when Artoo gets spit out by the swamp creature on Dagobah, Luke says, "You're lucky you don't taste good." But in the Special Edition, Luke says instead, "You're lucky to get out of there." What gives?



Good ears. This change is one of several subtle audio changes necessitated by cobbling together the most optimum soundtrack for the Special Edition. Like Episode IV, Episode V had different audio mixes that had to be distilled into one "definitive" version for Special Edition release. That process resulted in differences from earlier VHS mixes that many older fans had come to regard as the "correct" version.

There are other telltale audio discrepancies. Listen to Threepio remark, "Oh, this is suicide. There's nowhere to go!" in the Special Edition, whereas in the theatrical original, his comment ends with "suicide." And depending on which version you watch, you'll hear that Han has to get the shelter "built" or has to get the shelter "up."

In the original *Dark Empire* series by Tom Veitch and Cam Kennedy, why is Luke referred to as Lord Skywalker and never given a Darth title when he becomes an apprentice of the dark side? For that matter, Asajj Ventress from the *Clone Wars* also is not given this designation.



The simple answer is that Luke and Asajj are not Sith Lords. There is a difference between a dark-side user and a Sith Lord. That is, not all dark siders are Sith Lords – the teaching of the Sith is a specific discipline with specific lessons, which adheres to the covenant of two Sith Lords at a time. Asajj is a dark-side user who exists outside of Darth Tyrannus and Darth Sidious. Though she longs to be recognized as Sith, she's not.

As for Luke, at the time *Dark Empire* was written, the true nature of Sith dynamics and naming conventions had not been established. Regardless, Luke, Executor Sedriss and others were not Sith Lords, but rather dark Jedi, dark-side adepts and other dark-side followers. ☮



Questions?

Do you have a *Star Wars* trivia question that you can't find the answer to? Email it to us at QandA@paloo.com or send it to: STAR WARS INSIDER, 3245 146th Place SE, Suite 110, Bellevue, WA 98007. ATTN: Q&A

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